LEGISLATIVE LIBRARY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
3 3298 00259 4787

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

British Columbia Problem Gambling Prevalence Study

— Final Report —
March 12, 2003

DOC
BC
P824
D:B7P7
2003
c.3

PSSG03051-W 03/2003

LEGISLATIVE LIBR
VICTORIA BC V8V
JUN 05 2003

Table of Contents

1.0 Executive Summary 1
Measuring Problem Gambling 1
Key Survey Findings 2
Gambling Activity in British Columbia 2
Problem Gambling Prevalence 2
Profile of Problem Gamblers 3
Help Services 4

2.0 Measuring Problem Gambling 5
2.1. Defining Our Terms 5
2.2. Measuring Gambling Problems 6
2.3. Problem Gambling Research in Canada 7
CPGI Classifications 8
2.4. Aligning CPGI and SOGS Scores 9
2.5. Assessing Problem Gambling in the Future 9

3.0 Background and Methodology 10
3.1. Purpose and Objectives 10
3.2. Methodology 11
Questionnaire Design 11
Data Collection 12
Sample Design and Weighting 12
Margin of Error 13
Response Rates 14
What is the Impact of the Response Rate? 14
Ethnicity 15

4.0 Gambling Activity in British Columbia 16
4.1. Lifetime Gambling Activity 16
4.2. Past Year Gambling Activity 17
4.3. Weekly Gambling Activity 18
4.4. Gambling Activity Profiles 19
Profile of Lifetime Gamblers 19
Profile of Past Year Gamblers 19
Profile of Weekly Gamblers 20
Profile of Participants in Various Gambling Activities 21
Profile of Charity Raffle Gamblers 21
Profile of Lottery Game Gamblers 22
Lottery Games Usually Played 22
Profile of Bingo Gamblers 23
Where Mostly Play Bingo 23
Profile of Casino Gamblers 24
Where Mostly Visit a Casino 24

Profile of Electronic Gambling Machine Gamblers 25
Where Mostly Play Electronic Gambling Machines 25
Profile of Sports Lottery Game Gamblers 26
Profile of Horse Racing Gamblers 26
Profile of Sports or Other Event Gamblers 27
Profile of Private Game Gamblers 28
Profile of Internet Gamblers 29
Profile of Speculative Investment Gamblers 29

4.5. Gambling Behaviours 30

Gambling Versus Five Years Ago 30
Reasons for Gambling More 30
Reasons for Gambling Less 31
Personal Importance of Gambling 31
Favourite Gambling Activity 32
Gambling Alone or Accompanied 32
Distance Travelled 33
Spending on Gambling 33
Largest Loss in a Day 34
Age When First Gambled 35

5.0 Problem Gambling in British Columbia 36

5.1. Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI) 36

The Questions 36
Prevalence of Problem Gambling in British Columbia 37
Projecting Problem Gambling Prevalence to the BC Population 37
Comparison to Other Jurisdictions 38

5.2. South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS) 38

Among Past Year Gamblers 39
Among All British Columbians 39
Among Weekly Gamblers 40

5.3. Problem Gambling Profiles 41

By Region 41
By Gender 42
By Age 42
By Age and Gender 43
Men 43
Women 43
By Education 44
By Employment 44
By Kids at Home 45
By Marital Status 45
By Household Income 46
By Past Year Gambling Activity 46

5.4. Gambling Behaviours by CPGI Classification 47

Past Year Gambling Activity 47
Gambling Versus Five Years Ago 47
Personal Importance of Gambling 48
Gambling Alone or Accompanied 48
Distance Usually Travelled 49
Spending on Gambling 49
Largest Loss in a Day 50

Age When First Gambled 50

6.0 Correlates of Problem Gambling 51

6.1. Gamblers' Fallacies 51

Belief that Winning Follows Losing 51
Belief in Gambling Systems 51

6.2. Early Wins and Losses 52

Remembering a Big Win 52
Remembering a Big Loss 52

6.3. Other's Problems 53

Family Problems with Gambling 53
Problems with Other's Gambling 53

6.4. Alcohol and Illegal Drugs 54

Alcohol 54
Illegal Drugs 54
Alcohol and Drugs While Gambling 55
Gambling While Drunk or High 55
Perceived Alcohol/Drug Problems 55
Perceived Alcohol/Drug Problems 56

7.0 Awareness of Help Services 57

7.1. Toll-Free Help Line 57

7.2. Free Counselling Services 58

7.3. Community Counselling Services 58

8.0 Conclusions 59

Gambling Activity in British Columbia 59
Profile of Gamblers 59
Problem Gambling Prevalence 59
Profile of Problem Gamblers 60
Attitudes, Behaviours and Correlates of Problem Gambling 60
Help Services 61

References 62

Appendix - Questionnaire 65

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following report presents the results of a survey conducted by Ipsos-Reid and Gemini Research to estimate the number of individuals in British Columbia who are experiencing difficulties controlling their involvement in gambling, as well as to provide information about the demographic characteristics of such individuals. The survey was commissioned by the Province of British Columbia through an RFP process. The main purpose of the 2002 survey is to assist the Province in its efforts to help individuals and groups affected by this disorder.

The survey results are based on telephone interviews with a representative sample of 2,500 adult (18+) British Columbians. The interviews were conducted by Ipsos-Reid between November 12th and December 14th, 2002. All data have been weighted to accurately reflect the actual age, gender and regional distribution of adult British Columbians, according to 2001 census figures. The margin of error for the total sample of 2,500 interviews is ±2.0 percent, 95 times out of 100.

Measuring Problem Gambling

A unique feature of the 2002 British Columbia survey is the use of two problem gambling screens. The Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI) provides an estimate of problem gambling that can be compared with recent studies in other provinces and will serve as the baseline for future studies. The South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS) provides comparability to previous problem gambling studies conducted in British Columbia in 1996 and 1993. The CPGI and the SOGS use different questions to measure problem gambling. For this reason, the results from the two screens are not directly comparable.

The CPGI was developed after a 1997 inter-provincial group—including British Columbia—commissioned the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse to design and test a new instrument for measuring problem gambling in non-clinical settings. The need for a new gambling screen was based on growing dissatisfaction with the SOGS among Canadian researchers. The main criticism of the SOGS among Canadian researchers was that this screen was developed and tested in a clinical setting and the characteristics of its performance in community samples were unknown (Wiebe, Single & Falkowski-Ham, 2001).

Both of these screens are used to estimate the "prevalence" of problem gambling within a population. In this study, prevalence refers to the percentage of the adult BC population that exhibit problem gambling behaviours. Problem gambling is commonly used to indicate all gambling behaviour patterns which compromise, disrupt or damage personal, family, or vocational pursuit; it includes pathological gambling as the extreme end of a spectrum of gambling involvement. A history of problem gambling measurement and a more detailed explanation of the CPGI and the SOGS are provided in "*Section 2.0: Measuring Problem Gambling*" of the full report.

Key Survey Findings

Gambling Activity in British Columbia

- **Gambling participation in British Columbia has fallen since the 1993 and 1996 prevalence studies.** The 2002 survey finds significantly fewer British Columbians are gambling on a lifetime (91%), past year (85%) and weekly (39%) basis. The sharpest drop has been in lottery game play, although lottery games remain by far the most popular gambling activity in the province. In contrast, the proportion of British Columbians taking part in casino gambling activity has risen significantly from previous surveys.
- **Average individual spending has increased among British Columbians who gamble.** Provincial government statistics show that total spending on gambling in BC has increased since the 1993 and 1996 studies. With fewer British Columbians now gambling, the most likely explanation for this increase is that individual gamblers are spending more on average than they were in 1993 or 1996.
- **Nevertheless, gambling is a low cost entertainment activity for most British Columbians**, with two-thirds of past year gamblers reporting they spend less than $10 per month. Heavier spending is found among past year participants in certain activities, including those who gamble on the Internet, horse racing, sports lotteries, electronic gaming machines, bingo and casino games.
- **British Columbians in the pre-retirement age group (55 to 64 years) are the most likely to be gambling on a weekly basis.** In contrast, BC residents under the age of 35 years are much less likely to be weekly gamblers. Other more prevalent weekly gamblers include those with less education, retired residents, men and higher income residents.

Problem Gambling Prevalence

- **The estimate of total problem gamblers in British Columbia is in the middle of the pack of Canadian jurisdictions that have recently completed surveys using the CPGI methodology.** Manitoba is the only province that has a statistically lower level of total problem gamblers than BC. Meanwhile, the incidence of "severe" problem gamblers in British Columbia is the lowest of any comparable province.
- **Using the Canadian Problem Gambling Index, we estimate that 4.6 percent of adult British Columbians are problem gamblers**, including 4.2 percent who are moderate problem gamblers and 0.4 percent who are severe problem gamblers. When projected across the entire BC population, this equates to an estimate of between 123,400 and 177,100 total problem gamblers. The estimate of British Columbians with "severe" gambling problems is much lower (5,800 to 22,700).

CPGI Provincial Comparisons

	BC Dec 02 (n=2500)	AB Feb 02 (n=1804)	SK Jan 02 (n=1848)	MB Apr 01 (n=3119)	ON Dec 01 (n=5000)	NB Aug 01 (n=800)
Non-gamblers (past year)	15.0%	18.0%	13.4%	15.0%	16.8%	19.8%
Non-problem gamblers	69.3%	67.0%	71.4%	75.6%	69.8%	72.1%
Total Non-Problem	*84.3%*	*85.0%*	*84.8%*	*90.6%*	*86.6%*	*91.9%*
At risk gamblers	11.1%	9.8%	9.3%	6.0%	9.6%	4.9%
Moderate problem gamblers	4.2%	3.9%	4.7%	2.3%	3.1%	1.8%
Severe problem gamblers	0.4%	1.3%	1.2%	1.1%	0.7%	1.4%
Total Problem Gamblers	*4.6%*	*5.2%*	*5.9%*	*3.4%*	*3.8%*	*3.2%*

- **British Columbia is not without risk of developing problems in the future.** The level of at-risk gamblers (11.1%) in the province is the highest of any jurisdiction that has conducted a CPGI study. This suggests the need for focusing on prevention and awareness issues to avoid a progression of at-risk gamblers into the more serious problem categories.
- **Using the SOGS methodology to compare 2002 results with previous BC surveys, we find that the incidence of problem gambling in British Columbia is unchanged from previous surveys.** The 2002 survey classifies 3.8 percent of past year gamblers as either a problem gambler (2.8%) or a probable pathological gambler (1.1%). This estimate of total problem and probable pathological gamblers is identical to estimates from 1996 and 1993. There is also no statistical change from previous surveys among weekly gamblers or the population as a whole.

SOGS Among Past Year Gamblers

	BC 2002 (n=2134)	BC 1996 (n=738)	BC 1993 (n=1122)
Not at risk	76.8%	75.7%	80.2%
Low risk	19.4%	20.5%	16.0%
Problem gambler	2.8%	2.7%	2.6%
Probable pathological gambler	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%
Problem + Probable Pathological Gambler	3.8%*	3.8%	3.8%

* *Addition error due to rounding.*

Profile of Problem Gamblers

- **While problem gambling is not restricted to any particular segment of the BC population, some segments have much higher rates and merit special attention.** Specifically, the prevalence of problem gamblers is higher than average among Northern residents (10.2%), young residents (9.8%, 18-24 years) and lower household income residents (6.8%, <$30K).
- **In addition, past year participation in many gambling activities is associated with higher problem gambling rates.** The top activities in terms of problem gamblers are sports lotteries (12.9%), bingo (10.9%), horse racing (10.4%) and casinos (8.8%).
- **There is also evidence that problem gambling rates are higher among Internet gamblers (9.9%) and those who play electronic gaming machines outside casinos (8.4%).** These findings, however, are based on small sample sizes because of the very low level of participation in either of these two activities.
- **These findings point to the need for the Province to focus special attention on the North, youth and lower income residents.** They also suggest the need for venue specific efforts directed at sports lotteries, bingo halls, horse racing betting sites and casinos.
- **The 2002 survey confirms many behaviours, attitudes and correlates of problem gambling found in other studies.** These findings suggest some specific messaging for communications aimed at at-risk and problem gamblers. Relevant messages would include topics like distance traveled to gamble, money spent on gambling, belief in fallacies, remembering a big win and drinking while gambling.

Key Survey Findings

Gambling Activity in British Columbia

- **Gambling participation in British Columbia has fallen since the 1993 and 1996 prevalence studies.** The 2002 survey finds significantly fewer British Columbians are gambling on a lifetime (91%), past year (85%) and weekly (39%) basis. The sharpest drop has been in lottery game play, although lottery games remain by far the most popular gambling activity in the province. In contrast, the proportion of British Columbians taking part in casino gambling activity has risen significantly from previous surveys.
- **Average individual spending has increased among British Columbians who gamble.** Provincial government statistics show that total spending on gambling in BC has increased since the 1993 and 1996 studies. With fewer British Columbians now gambling, the most likely explanation for this increase is that individual gamblers are spending more on average than they were in 1993 or 1996.
- **Nevertheless, gambling is a low cost entertainment activity for most British Columbians**, with two-thirds of past year gamblers reporting they spend less than $10 per month. Heavier spending is found among past year participants in certain activities, including those who gamble on the Internet, horse racing, sports lotteries, electronic gaming machines, bingo and casino games.
- **British Columbians in the pre-retirement age group (55 to 64 years) are the most likely to be gambling on a weekly basis.** In contrast, BC residents under the age of 35 years are much less likely to be weekly gamblers. Other more prevalent weekly gamblers include those with less education, retired residents, men and higher income residents.

Problem Gambling Prevalence

- **The estimate of total problem gamblers in British Columbia is in the middle of the pack of Canadian jurisdictions that have recently completed surveys using the CPGI methodology.** Manitoba is the only province that has a statistically lower level of total problem gamblers than BC. Meanwhile, the incidence of "severe" problem gamblers in British Columbia is the lowest of any comparable province.
- **Using the Canadian Problem Gambling Index, we estimate that 4.6 percent of adult British Columbians are problem gamblers**, including 4.2 percent who are moderate problem gamblers and 0.4 percent who are severe problem gamblers. When projected across the entire BC population, this equates to an estimate of between 123,400 and 177,100 total problem gamblers. The estimate of British Columbians with "severe" gambling problems is much lower (5,800 to 22,700).

CPGI Provincial Comparisons

	BC Dec 02 (n=2500)	AB Feb 02 (n=1804)	SK Jan 02 (n=1848)	MB Apr 01 (n=3119)	ON Dec 01 (n=5000)	NB Aug 01 (n=800)
Non-gamblers (past year)	15.0%	18.0%	13.4%	15.0%	16.8%	19.8%
Non-problem gamblers	69.3%	67.0%	71.4%	75.6%	69.8%	72.1%
Total Non-Problem	*84.3%*	*85.0%*	*84.8%*	*90.6%*	*86.6%*	*91.9%*
At risk gamblers	11.1%	9.8%	9.3%	6.0%	9.6%	4.9%
Moderate problem gamblers	4.2%	3.9%	4.7%	2.3%	3.1%	1.8%
Severe problem gamblers	0.4%	1.3%	1.2%	1.1%	0.7%	1.4%
Total Problem Gamblers	*4.6%*	*5.2%*	*5.9%*	*3.4%*	*3.8%*	*3.2%*

- **British Columbia is not without risk of developing problems in the future.** The level of at-risk gamblers (11.1%) in the province is the highest of any jurisdiction that has conducted a CPGI study. This suggests the need for focusing on prevention and awareness issues to avoid a progression of at-risk gamblers into the more serious problem categories.
- **Using the SOGS methodology to compare 2002 results with previous BC surveys, we find that the incidence of problem gambling in British Columbia is unchanged from previous surveys.** The 2002 survey classifies 3.8 percent of past year gamblers as either a problem gambler (2.8%) or a probable pathological gambler (1.1%). This estimate of total problem and probable pathological gamblers is identical to estimates from 1996 and 1993. There is also no statistical change from previous surveys among weekly gamblers or the population as a whole.

SOGS Among Past Year Gamblers

	BC 2002 (n=2134)	BC 1996 (n=736)	BC 1993 (n=1122)
Not at risk	76.8%	75.7%	80.2%
Low risk	19.4%	20.5%	16.0%
Problem gambler	2.8%	2.7%	2.6%
Probable pathological gambler	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%
Problem + Probable Pathological Gambler	3.8%*	3.8%	3.8%

* *Addition error due to rounding.*

Profile of Problem Gamblers

- **While problem gambling is not restricted to any particular segment of the BC population, some segments have much higher rates and merit special attention.** Specifically, the prevalence of problem gamblers is higher than average among Northern residents (10.2%), young residents (9.8%, 18-24 years) and lower household income residents (6.8%, <$30K).
- **In addition, past year participation in many gambling activities is associated with higher problem gambling rates.** The top activities in terms of problem gamblers are sports lotteries (12.9%), bingo (10.9%), horse racing (10.4%) and casinos (8.8%).
- **There is also evidence that problem gambling rates are higher among Internet gamblers (9.9%) and those who play electronic gaming machines outside casinos (8.4%).** These findings, however, are based on small sample sizes because of the very low level of participation in either of these two activities.
- **These findings point to the need for the Province to focus special attention on the North, youth and lower income residents.** They also suggest the need for venue specific efforts directed at sports lotteries, bingo halls, horse racing betting sites and casinos.
- **The 2002 survey confirms many behaviours, attitudes and correlates of problem gambling found in other studies.** These findings suggest some specific messaging for communications aimed at at-risk and problem gamblers. Relevant messages would include topics like distance traveled to gamble, money spent on gambling, belief in fallacies, remembering a big win and drinking while gambling.

Help Services

- **Most British Columbians are unaware of the help services available for at-risk and problem gamblers in BC.** Three-in-ten BC residents say they are aware of free counselling services (29%) and of counselling services available in their community (29%). Nearly five-in-ten (45%) residents claim to be aware of the toll-free help line in British Columbia.
- **These services should be promoted to British Columbians who fall into one of the problem gambling or at-risk categories.** In addition, awareness of these programs and services is much lower in the Lower Mainland than in the rest of BC. Younger residents are much less likely to be aware of toll-free help lines and that counselling services are provided free of charge. Older residents are much less likely to be aware of counselling services in their particular community.

2.0 MEASURING PROBLEM GAMBLING

In the 1980s, gambling legalization proceeded with little awareness of the potentially harmful impacts that gambling can have on individuals, families and communities. In the 1990s, however, prevalence surveys became an essential component in the establishment and monitoring of legal gambling around the world.

2.1. *Defining Our Terms*

Gambling is a broad concept that includes diverse activities, undertaken in a wide variety of settings, appealing to different sorts of people and perceived in various ways by participants and observers. Failure to appreciate this diversity can limit scientific understanding and investigation of gambling and gambling problems. Another reason to note the differences between various forms of gambling arises from accumulating evidence that some types of gambling are more strongly associated with gambling-related problems than others (Abbott & Volberg, 1999).

People take part in gambling activities because they enjoy them and obtain benefits from their participation. For most people, gambling is generally a positive experience. However, for a minority, gambling is associated with difficulties of varying severity and duration. Some regular gamblers develop significant, debilitating problems that also typically result in harm to people close to them and to the wider community (Abbott & Volberg, 1999).

Pathological gambling was first recognized as a mental disorder with its inclusion in the third edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-III) of the American Psychiatric Association (1980). Each subsequent revision of this manual has seen changes in the diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling. The essential features of pathological gambling are presently defined by the American Psychiatric Association (1994) as (1) a continuous or periodic loss of control over gambling; (2) a progression, in gambling frequency and amounts wagered, in the preoccupation with gambling and in obtaining monies with which to gamble; and (3) a continuation of gambling involvement despite adverse consequences.

The term problem gambling is used in a variety of ways. In some situations, its use is limited to those whose gambling-related difficulties are less serious than those of pathological gamblers. In other situations, it is used to indicate all of the patterns of gambling behavior that compromise, disrupt or damage personal, family or vocational pursuits (Cox et al, 1997; Lesieur, 1998). In the Canadian context, problem gambling is defined as "gambling behaviour that creates negative consequences for the gambler, others in his or her social network, or for the community" (Ferris & Wynne, 2001). Patton et al (2002) note that this definition is comprehensive in that it applies to others affected as well as to the individual gambler and applies to a range of harmful consequences that extend beyond an individual's own difficulties with gambling.

From this perspective, pathological gambling can be regarded as a sub-category, or one end of a continuum, of gambling-related problems. Problem gamblers, as well as individuals who score even lower on problem gambling screens (at-risk gamblers) are of concern because they represent much larger proportions of the population than pathological gamblers. These groups are also of interest because of the possibility that their gambling-related difficulties may become more severe over time.

In considering the public health risks of problem gambling, it is important to note that not all of the features of problem or pathological gambling need be present at one point in time (Abbott & Volberg, 1999; Gerstein et al, 1999). Some of the impacts that at-risk, problem and pathological gamblers may experience include psychological difficulties, such as anxiety, depression, guilt, exacerbation of alcohol and drug problems and attempts at suicide as well as stress-related physical illnesses such as hypertension and heart disease. Interpersonal problems include

arguments with family, friends and co-workers and breakdown of relationships, often culminating in separation or divorce. Job and school problems include poor work performance, abuse of leave time and loss of job. Financial effects loom large and include reliance on family and friends, substantial credit card debt, unpaid creditors and bankruptcy. Finally, there may be legal problems as a result of criminal behavior undertaken to obtain money to gamble or pay gambling debts (Lesieur, 1998; Volberg, 2001).

2.2. *Measuring Gambling Problems*

The tools used to generate numbers are always a reflection of the work that researchers and others are doing to identify and describe the phenomena in which they are interested (Alonso & Starr, 1987; Gerson, 1983; Prewitt, 1986). Historically, standardized measures and indices have often emerged in situations where there is, simultaneously, intense distrust and a perceived need for public action. Examples include the emergence of measures of "public utility" in France in the mid-1800s and the development of cost-benefit analysis in the United States in the mid-1900s (Porter, 1995).

Governments began funding services for individuals with gambling problems in the 1980s. As a first step toward establishing these services, policy makers sought information about the number of people who might seek help for their gambling problems and what they looked like. In responding to these questions, researchers adopted methods from the field of psychiatric epidemiology to investigate the prevalence of gambling problems in the general population.

In the 1980s, few tools existed to measure gambling problems and only one, the South Oaks Gambling Screen, (SOGS) had been rigorously developed and tested for performance (Lesieur & Blume, 1987). The SOGS, closely based on the original diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling, was developed to screen for gambling problems in clinical populations. The 20 weighted items on the SOGS include hiding evidence of gambling, spending more time or money gambling than intended, arguing with family members over gambling and borrowing money from a variety of sources to gamble or to pay gambling debts. In developing the SOGS, specific items as well as the entire screen were tested for reliability and validity with a variety of groups, including hospital workers, university students, prison inmates and inpatients in alcohol and substance abuse treatment programs (Lesieur & Blume, 1987; Lesieur, Blume & Zoppa 1986; Lesieur & Klein 1985).

Like other tools in psychiatric research, the SOGS was quickly adopted in clinical settings as well as in epidemiological research. The SOGS was first used in a prevalence survey in New York State (Volberg & Steadman, 1988). Since then, the SOGS and subsequent modifications of the original screen have been used in population-based research in more than 45 jurisdictions in the United States, Canada, Asia and Europe (Abbott & Volberg, 1996, 2000; Bondolfi, Osiek & Ferrero, 2000; Productivity Commission, 1999; Shaffer, Hall & Vander Bilt, 1999; Sproston, Erens & Orford, 2000; Volberg, 2001; Volberg et al, 2001). This widespread use of the SOGS has been due, at least partly, to the great advantage of comparability within and across jurisdictions that came with use of a standard tool (Walker & Dickerson, 1996). Although there were increasingly well-focused grounds for concern about the performance of the SOGS in non-clinical environments, this tool remained the *de facto* standard in the field until the mid-1990s (Volberg & Banks, 1990).

There is a growing number of tools to measure gambling problems for different purposes. Since 1990, at least nine screens for adults and three screens for adolescents have been developed. Despite this proliferation, the psychometric properties of most of these new tools remain unexamined. Even more significantly, few of these new screens have been tested for their differential performance in clinical settings, population research, and program evaluation. Another concern is how to calibrate the performance of these new screens with the results of more than a decade of SOGS-based research.

2.3. *Problem Gambling Research in Canada*

Between 1992 and 1997, numerous surveys of gambling and problem gambling in the general population were completed in Canadian provinces. One or more surveys were completed in Alberta (Wynne, Smith & Volberg, 1994; Wynne Resources, 1998), British Columbia (Angus Reid Group & Gemini Research, 1994; Angus Reid Group, 1996), Manitoba (Criterion Research, 1993, 1995), New Brunswick (Baseline Market Research, 1992, 1996), Nova Scotia (Omnifacts Research, 1993; Baseline Marketing Research, 1996), Ontario (Insight Canada Research, 1993; Ferris & Stirpe, 1995) and Saskatchewan (Volberg, 1994). All of these surveys used the SOGS as the primary measure of problem and pathological gambling.

While these surveys yielded information that could be compared with numerous other countries and jurisdictions, there was growing dissatisfaction with the SOGS among Canadian researchers. The main criticism of the SOGS among Canadian researchers was that this screen was developed and tested in a clinical setting and the characteristics of its performance in community samples were unknown (Wiebe, Single & Falkowski-Ham, 2001). Another criticism of both the SOGS and the DSM-IV criteria among Canadian researchers was that, while these tools are useful in clinical settings, they were developed prior to the introduction and widespread distribution of electronic gaming machines and do not take into account unique aspects of this new gambling activity (Focal Research Consultants, 2001).

In 1997, an inter-provincial group—including British Columbia—of government agencies with responsibility for addressing problem gambling commissioned the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse to conduct research to clarify the concept of problem gambling in the general population, develop an operational definition to guide research, treatment and prevention, and design and test a new instrument for measuring problem gambling in non-clinical settings. The goal was to develop a more meaningful measure of problem gambling specifically for use in general population surveys that placed this disorder in a wider social and environmental context.

The research team developed an instrument called the Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI) which was tested for its performance in a Canadian-wide survey that included a large general population sample, retesting of a sub-sample of respondents from the larger survey, and clinical validation interviews with a separate sub-sample (Ferris & Wynne, 2001). The reliability of the CPGI was good in this survey with a coefficient alpha of 0.84 and the test-retest reliability of the screen was acceptable with a correlation coefficient of 0.78. The research team also examined validity in a variety of ways, including content (or face) validity, criterion validity or the accuracy of the instrument in relation to other, more widely used screens as well as clinical interviews, and construct validity whereby scores vary as expected based on other measures such as gambling frequency, gambling expenditures, adverse consequences and some demographic variables. Based on this work, the developers believe that the CPGI measures non-pathological gambling problems better than the SOGS.

The full questionnaire includes over 30 items assessing gambling involvement, gambling problems, correlates and demographics. The CPGI itself includes nine scored items: chasing losses, escalating to maintain excitement (analogous to tolerance in other addictions), borrowing or selling to obtain money to gamble, betting more than one can afford, feeling guilty, being criticized by others, harm to health, financial difficulties to one's household, and feeling that one might have a problem with gambling. Most of these items are adapted from the SOGS or the DSM-IV criteria for pathological gambling. The exceptions are harm to health and financial difficulties to one's household. As the developers of the CPGI point out, this screen represents an evolution of older measures rather than something entirely new (Ferris & Wynne, 2001).

The CPGI has now been used in general population surveys in Alberta (Smith & Wynne, 2002), Manitoba (Patton et al, 2002), New Brunswick (Focal Research Consultants, 2001), Ontario (Wiebe, Single & Falkowski-Ham, 2001) and Saskatchewan (Wynne, 2002).

CPGI Classifications

Responses to each of the nine CPGI items are scored as follows: Never (0), Some of the time (1), Most of the time (2) and Almost always (3). Respondents are classified as Non-Gamblers if they have not gambled in the past year and as Non-Problem Gamblers if they have gambled in the past year but score zero on the CPGI. Respondents with a score of 1 or 2 are classified as At Risk Gamblers. Those with a score of 3 to 7 are classified as Moderate Problem Gamblers. Those with a score of 8 or more are classified as Severe Problem Gamblers.

In British Columbia, as in Ontario, the labels associated with different classifications of the CPGI have been changed slightly from the original. Ontario researchers argue that the original labels imply a progression in the development of gambling problems about which little is known (Wiebe, Single & Falkowski-Ham, 2001). The creators of the CPGI labeled the classifications as non-problem gamblers (CPGI=0, also labeled non-problem gamblers in BC and Ontario), low-risk gamblers (CPGI=1-2, labeled at risk gamblers in BC and Ontario), moderate-risk gamblers (CPGI=3-7, labeled moderate problem gamblers in BC and Ontario) and problem gamblers (CPGI=8+, labeled severe problem gamblers in BC and Ontario).

The creators of the CPGI provided a description of the characteristics of each sub-classification (*The Canadian Problem Gambling Index: Final Report, 2001*). These descriptions are listed below.

- **Non-gambling** - Respondents in this group have not gambled at all in the past 12 months, and will have been skipped through the majority of the questionnaire, with the exception of the correlates section. Non-gamblers may have some of the correlates of problem gambling. This information is important in the context of long-term tracking, in that the correlates may predict those who were once or may become gamblers or problem gamblers.
- **Non-problem gamblers** - Respondents in this group will have responded "never" to most of the indicators of behavioral problems, although there may well be a frequent gambler with heavy involvement in terms of time and money. The "professional" gambler would fit into this category. This group probably will not have experienced any adverse consequences of gambling, nor will they agree with the distorted cognition items. Again, the information on correlates here is important for comparative purposes, and would be particularly useful in long-term tracking.
- **At risk gamblers** - Respondents in this group will have responded "never" to most of the indicators of behavioral problems, but will have one or more sometimes or more often responses. Gamblers may be at risk if they are heavily involved in gambling and if they respond positively to at least two of the correlates of problem gambling. This group likely will not have experienced any adverse consequences from gambling.
- **Moderate problem gamblers** - Respondents in this group will have responded "never" to most of the indicators of behavioral problems, but will have one or more "most of the time" or "always" responses. Gamblers may be at risk if they are heavily involved in gambling and if they respond positively to three or four of the correlates of problem gambling. This group may or may not have experienced adverse consequences from gambling.
- **Severe problem gamblers** - Respondents in this group are those who have experienced adverse consequences from their gambling, and may have lost control of their behavior. Involvement in gambling can be at any level, but is likely to be heavy. This group is more likely to endorse the cognitive distortion items. The correlates may be useful here in profiling capacity, as we would anticipate that this group would respond positively to more of the correlates than members of other groups, on average.

2.4. *Aligning CPGI and SOGS Scores*

Although the developers argue that it is possible to compare the results of surveys conducted using the CPGI with those conducted using the SOGS, only one of the prior surveys using the CPGI carried out in Canada provides a way to directly compare these two screens. The only comparison that is available is to compare the items that the measures have in common. Comparing scores on the very small number of CPGI items that are taken from the SOGS does not provide a very satisfactory approach since the number of items that can be compared is quite small and the response scales used in the two screens are different.

The 1996 and 1993 prevalence studies in British Columbia employed the South Oaks Gambling Screen to estimate rates of problem gambling. In order to provide historical comparability, the SOGS questions were asked again in the 2002 survey. British Columbia and Manitoba are the only provinces to employ both the CPGI and SOGS methodologies.

2.5. *Assessing Problem Gambling in the Future*

The assumption underlying all of the existing gambling research is that gambling-related difficulties are a robust phenomenon that exist in the community and can be measured. Despite agreement among researchers and treatment professionals at this fundamental level, there is disagreement about the concepts and measurement of gambling-related difficulties. While the ascription of "conceptual and methodological chaos" to the field (Shaffer, Hall & Vander Bilt, 19978) may be an overstatement of the situation among its experienced researchers, the presence of competing concepts and methods is not uncommon among emerging and even mature scientific fields. Nevertheless disputes among experts have led to some degree of public confusion and uncertainty about the prevalence of problem gambling and the impacts of legal gambling on society.

Like much of science, measurement is a negotiable process. Instrumentation is always a reflection of the work that researchers are doing to identify and describe the phenomena in which they are interested. Each of the methods used to classify problem gamblers represents a culturally and historically situated consensus about the nature of problem gambling. As research continues and as the definitions of problem gambling change, new instruments and new methods for estimating prevalence in the general population and for testing models of gambling behavior will continue to emerge. To advance the field of gambling studies in an orderly manner, these emerging methods must be tested against each other and against existing tools, such as the South Oaks Gambling Screen. This approach will serve to ensure the relevance of our past work as well as our work in the future.

3.0 BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

In the wake of the expansion of legalized gambling, and in response to anecdotal reports of increases in problem gambling in the general population, the Government of British Columbia engaged Ipsos-Reid and Gemini Research to conduct a follow-up to the 1993 and 1996 studies establishing the prevalence of problem gambling in the province. Since the completion of the last survey in 1996, legal gaming opportunities in British Columbia have expanded to include slot machines, destination casinos, electronic linked bingo, as well as illegal gaming in the form of Internet gambling.

Prevalence surveys provide estimates of the number of individuals in the general population who are experiencing difficulties controlling their involvement in gambling as well as information about the demographic characteristics of such individuals. This information is vital in the process of planning for the availability of gaming opportunities in the future and in the appropriate design of services for problem and pathological gamblers in these jurisdictions.

3.1. *Purpose and Objectives*

The main purpose of the 2002 survey is to provide information about the impacts of problem gambling in BC to assist the Province in its efforts to help individuals and groups affected by this disorder. Specifically, this research is designed to provide the Province with the following information:

- Prevalence and nature of gambling and problem gambling within the adult population of British Columbia;
- Demographic characteristics of non-gamblers and gambler subtypes;
- Gambling activities of the subtypes;
- Problem gambling behaviour and consequences for gambler subtypes;
- Comparisons with research findings from the 1993 and 1996 prevalence studies conducted in BC;
- Comparisons with research findings from studies conducted in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario;
- Comparisons with research findings from the national Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI) validation study; and,
- Conclusions, implications and recommendations that may assist the Problem Gambling Program, Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch, BC Lottery Corporation and the Government of British Columbia in developing policies and programs to address the problems associated with excessive gambling.

3.2. Methodology

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire for the 2002 British Columbia problem gambling prevalence survey is composed of four major sections. The first section focuses on involvement in gambling activities. It asks about the frequency of gambling involvement, spending and location of participation in a list of gambling activities. It also asks about changes in gambling levels over the last five years, as well as travel distance and gambling alone or accompanied.

The relevant gambling activities for this study included:

- Charity raffles such as a hospital lottery;
- Other lottery games like 649, Daily 3, Scratch & Win tickets, Keno or Pull-tabs;
- Bingo;
- Casino gambling;
- Electronic gaming machines outside of a casino;
- Sports lottery games;
- Horse racing;
- Betting on sports or other events;
- Private games and games of skill;
- Internet gambling;
- Speculative investments; and
- Any other types of games not mentioned above.

The second section of the questionnaire contains the questions that are used to score the two measures used to estimate the prevalence of problem gambling in British Columbia. This includes the nine items used to score the Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI) as well as the 20 items used to score the South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS). A unique feature of the British Columbia study is the use of these two measures in the same survey. The CPGI provides an estimate of problem gambling that can be compared with other provinces and will serve as the baseline for future studies. The SOGS provides comparability to previous problem gambling studies conducted in British Columbia.

The third section of the questionnaire contains questions that are known to correlate with problem gambling. This includes questions about gambling beliefs and early experiences with gambling or betting money.

The fourth section of the question asks for demographic information that can be used to develop a very detailed profile of problem gamblers in British Columbia.

A copy of the final questionnaire instrument is contained in the Appendix.

Data Collection

Ipsos-Reid completed a total of 2,500 telephone interviews with a representative sample of adult (18+) British Columbians. The interviews were conducted between November 12th and December 14th, 2002 by trained interviewers in the Ipsos-Reid call centres in Winnipeg and Edmonton. Interviews lasted an average of 15 minutes.

A two-stage sampling procedure was utilized with households selected using a random digit dialing (RDD) procedure and the individual adult respondent selected using the most recent birthday method. The RDD sampling ensures that all households, including those with unlisted numbers, had an equal chance of being interviewed. In order to improve response rates, up to 10 callbacks were completed per telephone number.

An in-depth interviewer training session was conducted prior to the start of fielding. This session outlined the nature of problem gambling and the areas of potential sensitivity for respondents. Interviewers were provided a resource list in case they encountered someone in crisis or someone who asks for a number to call. Interviewers were also provided with a question and answer sheet to respond to queries regarding the nature of the study and the purpose of specific items in the questionnaire

Sample Design and Weighting

The 2,500 interviews were conducted on a random basis across the entire province. Quotas were established to ensure that the final sample accurately reflected the breakdown of males (49%) and females (51%) in British Columbia. As mentioned, the most recent birthday method was used to select respondents to ensure a balanced mix of age groups participated in the survey.

All data have been weighted to accurately reflect the actual age, gender and regional distribution of adult British Columbians, according to 2001 census figures. The sample frame consisted of five regions. These five regions are based on the 28 Regional Districts that make up British Columbia. The five regions and their component Regional Districts include:

- The Fraser Valley, based on the Fraser Valley Regional District (#9)
- Greater Vancouver, based on the Greater Vancouver Regional District (#15)
- Vancouver Island/Coast, based on the following Regional Districts,
    - Capital (#17)
    - Cowichan Valley (#19)
    - Nanaimo (#21)
    - Alberni-Clayoquot (#23)
    - Comox-Strathcona (#25)
    - Powell River (#27)
    - Sunshine Coast (#29)
    - Mount Waddington (#43)
    - Central Coast (#45)
- Southern British Columbia, based on the following Regional Districts,
    - East Kootenay (#1)
    - Central Kootenay (#3)
    - Kootenay Boundary (#5)
    - Okanagan-Similkameen (#7)
    - Squamish-Lillooet (#31)
    - Thompson-Nicola (#33)
    - Central Okanagan (#35)
    - North Okanagan (#37)
    - Columbia-Shuswap (#39)
    - Cariboo (#41)

- Northern British Columbia, based on the following Regional Districts,
  - Skeena-Queen Charlotte (#47)
  - Kitimat-Stikine (#49)
  - Bulkley-Nechako (#51)
  - Fraser-Fort George (#53)
  - Peace River (#55)
  - Stikine (#57)
  - Northern Rockies (#59

The final weighted sample is summarized in the table.

Gender	
Males	**49%**
Females	**51%**
Age	
18 to 34 years	**29%**
35 to 54 years	**40%**
55+ years	**29%**
Note 2% refused to give their age	
Region	
Fraser Valley	**6%**
Greater Vancouver	**50%**
Island/Coast	**19%**
South	**19%**
North	**7%**

Margin of Error

The margin of error for the total sample of 2,500 interviews is ±2.0 percent, 95 times out of 100. This margins of error is calculated at the maximum variance (test statistic = 50%). For example, when the sample mean is 50 percent, we can be reasonably certain (95 times out of 100) that the true population mean will fall between 48.0 percent (50% minus 2.0%) and 52.0 percent (50% plus 2.0%).

The margin of error narrows as survey means approach either 0 percent or 100 percent. For example, a sample mean of 5 percent has a margin of error of just ±0.9 percent, 95 times out of 100, meaning that we can be reasonably certain (95 times out of 100) that the true population mean will fall between 4.1 percent (5% minus 0.9%) and 5.9 percent (5% plus 0.9%).

The margin of error is wider for subgroups of the overall sample. This report makes frequent use of CPGI classifications as a subgroup in the analysis. The margins of error for each of these classifications are shown below. Again, these margins of error are calculated at maximum variance (test statistic = 50%).

- Non-gamblers (n=366) ±5.2%, 95 times out of 100
- Non-problem gamblers (n=1757) ±2.4%, 95 times out of 100
- Low risk gambler (n=266) ±6.1%, 95 times out of 100
- Moderate risk gamblers (n=100) ±9.8%, 95 times out of 100
- Problem gamblers (n=11) ±29.6%, 95 times out of 100

Response Rates

Response rates for problem gambling studies vary widely across jurisdictions. The response rate in the 2002 British Columbia survey was 27 percent, which is at the lower end of Canadian problem gambling studies. This response rate is calculated by taking the total number of completes (2,500) and dividing it by the total number of potentially eligible households contacted (9,318). The eligible households include 2,500 completed interviews, 6,583 household refusals and 235 mid-survey refusals.

We maintain confidence that the 2002 survey presents an accurate picture of gambling behaviours and problem gambling prevalence in British Columbia. There are several reasons for this confidence:

- The response rate in the 2002 survey is on par with previous problem gambling studies conducted in British Columbia. For example, the 1993 survey had a response rate of 25 percent. A follow-up validation study in non-respondents in 1993 showed no non-response bias in demographics or gambling involvement.
- Response rates are consistently lower in British Columbia than in other Canadian provinces. A large urban population base and an outdoor lifestyle are the key contributors to these lower response rates.
- The 2002 survey is on par with the 2000 Professional Market Research Society (PMRS) survey of national response rates. This survey of major market research and public opinion polling firms reported an average refusal rate of 77 percent on national omnibus surveys. It also reported that national refusal rates on custom studies varied between 68 percent and 77 percent, depending on the length and topic.

What is the Impact of the Response Rate?

There is great uncertainty about the characteristics of individuals who choose not to participate in gambling surveys. It has generally been assumed that people who are not contacted or who decline to be interviewed in gambling surveys include disproportionate numbers of problem gamblers (Lesieur, 1994). Alternatively, it has been suggested that both people with little involvement or interest in gambling and problem gamblers may be over-represented among respondents in surveys with low to medium response rates. If this is the case, the effects of their omission may partially or totally cancel each other out (Abbott & Volberg, 1999).

The results of recent national surveys in New Zealand and Sweden shed light on this issue (Abbott, Volberg & Rönnberg, 2001). In both of these surveys, data collection was carried out by official government statistics agencies and high response rates were achieved (76% and 72%, respectively). In spite of unprecedented measures taken to contact and interview selected respondents in these surveys, estimates of the prevalence of problem gambling in both countries were low relative to recent surveys in North America and Australia.

In attaining their high response rates, it is possible that the national surveys in New Zealand and Sweden picked up disproportionate numbers of people with low gambling involvement. To assess the impact of variations in response rates on problem gambling prevalence estimates, Abbott (2001) compared the results of the New Zealand study with the results of a recent national Australian survey that used a similar problem gambling screen (Productivity Commission, 1999). Like many of the gambling surveys carried out in North America, the Australian study was carried out by a private research company and achieved a relatively low response rate.

Abbott (2001) found that the New Zealand problem gambling prevalence estimate was very similar to prevalence estimates obtained for the two Australian states that had similar per capita gambling expenditures. The New Zealand prevalence estimate was markedly lower than estimates from Australian states and territories with higher per capita expenditures. This

comparison provides further support for the contention that problem gambling is a "robust and reliable phenomenon" largely impervious to differences in researcher and research methodology and quality (Shaffer, Hall & Vander Bilt, 1997: 61). It also suggests that the relatively low response rate achieved in the 2002 British Columbia survey is unlikely to have had a substantial impact on the estimate of problem gambling prevalence in the province.

Ethnicity

This report does not present any analysis by ethnicity. There are several reasons for this omission. First, the primary purpose of the survey is to measure the prevalence of problem gambling across the entire BC population. Second, the sample sizes are very small for all but a few ethnic groups. Third, the survey was fielded in English only, meaning that samples for many ethnic groups will not be representative of their entire population. Fourth, we believe that custom studies targeted at a particular ethnic group are required in order to gain a true picture of problem gambling in those ethnic communities. For example, while Chinese Canadians are certainly distinct in their gambling profile, we anticipate that their behaviours and consequences would be underreported and of questionable validity.

> *"While gambling appears to be a common recreational activity amongst the Chinese, 'excessive gambling' meets with significant social disapproval. The Chinese Classification of Mental Disorders does not include pathological gambling-a reflection of a cultural reluctance to recognize this behavior as a mental health issue. Other reasons to assume that pathological gambling will be under-reported for this population include the desire to conceal problems due to social stigma associated with mental illness, fear of 'losing face' in public, marked reliance on family support and management in preference to consulting professional organizations, the disposition to use of personal control in overcoming excessive behaviors and a reluctance to approach mainstream health services because of language and cultural differences. Given these forces, it is likely that pathological gambling in the Chinese community will remain hidden and/or be under-reported."*
>
> *From Blaszczynski, A., S. Huynh, V. J. Dumlao & E. Farrell. 1999. "Problem Gambling Within a Chinese Community," Journal of Gambling Studies 14 (4): 359-380.*

4.0 GAMBLING ACTIVITY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

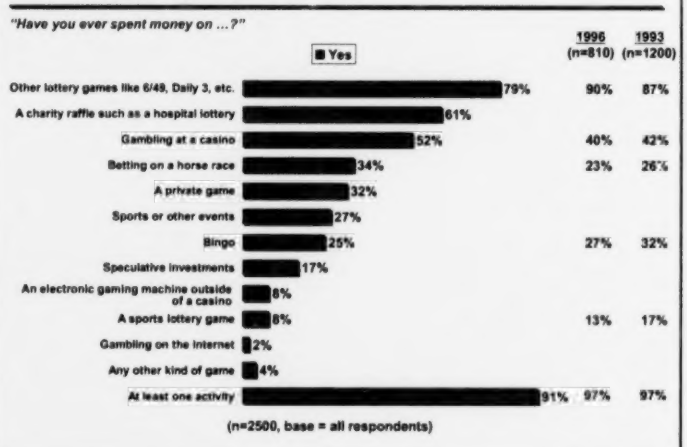
Gambling participation in British Columbia has fallen since the 1993 and 1996 prevalence studies on a lifetime, past year and weekly basis. The sharpest drop has been in lottery play, although lottery games remain by far the most popular gambling activity in the province. In contrast, the proportion of British Columbians taking part in casino gambling has risen significantly from previous surveys.

4.1. *Lifetime Gambling Activity*

The vast majority of British Columbians have gambled at some point in their lifetime. In fact, nine-in-ten (91%) British Columbians say they have taken part in at least one gambling activity during their lifetime. While this figure seems high, it has dropped significantly from 97 percent in both the 1996 and 1993 prevalence surveys.

Lottery games and charity raffles are the most popular lifetime gambling activities for British Columbians. Eight-in-ten (79%) have played a lottery game like 649, Daily 3, Scratch & Win, Keno or Pull-tabs, and six-in-ten (61%) have played a charity raffle such as a hospital lottery. Gambling at a casino (52%) is the only other lifetime activity in which a majority of British Columbians have participated.

Lifetime Gambling Activities


"Have you ever spent money on ...?"
Yes
1996 (n=810)
1993 (n=1200)
Other lottery games like 6/49, Daily 3, etc. 79% 90% 87%
A charity raffle such as a hospital lottery 61%
Gambling at a casino 52% 40% 42%
Betting on a horse race 34% 23% 26%
A private game 32%
Sports or other events 27%
Bingo 25% 27% 32%
Speculative investments 17%
An electronic gaming machine outside of a casino 8%
A sports lottery game 8% 13% 17%
Gambling on the Internet 2%
Any other kind of game 4%
At least one activity 91% 97% 97%
(n=2500, base = all respondents)

In terms of other popular lifetime gambling activities, roughly one-in-three BC residents has bet on a horse race (34%) or a private game (32%), and one-in-four residents has bet on sports or other events (27%) or played bingo for money (25%).

While the overall lifetime gambling trend is down, there is some variation among individual gambling activities. Specifically, lottery and sports lottery gambling are down from previous surveys, while casino and horse race gambling are up.

- Lottery gambling (excluding charity raffles) is down (79% vs. 90% 1996, 87% 1993).
- Sports lottery gambling is down (8% vs. 13% 1996, 17% 1993).
- Casino gambling is up (52% vs. 40% 1996, 42% 1993).
- Horse race gambling is up (34% vs. 23% 1996, 26% 1993).

4.2. *Past Year Gambling Activity*

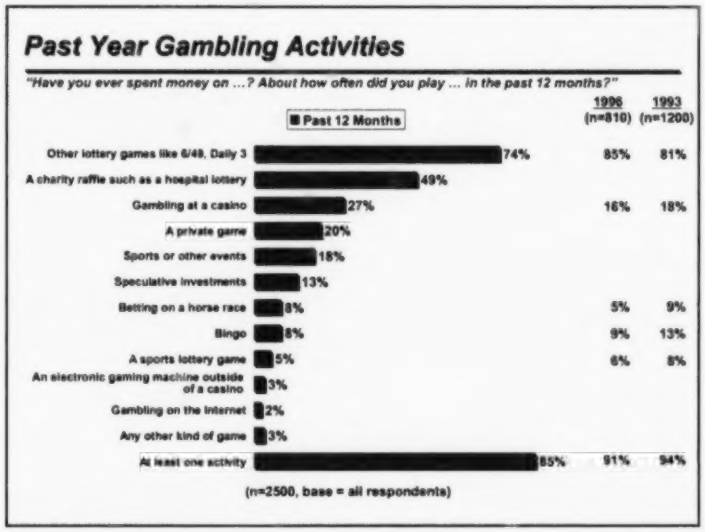
Most British Columbians are active gamblers. Eighty-five percent say they have participated in at least one gambling activity over the past 12 months. As with lifetime gambling, this is a significant decline from previous surveys (85% vs. 91% 1996, 94% 1993).

Lottery games are by far the most popular past year gambling activity of British Columbians. Three-in-four (74%) residents say they have spent money on a lottery game like 649, Daily 3, Scratch & Win, Keno or Pull-tabs within the past 12 months. Nevertheless, the rate of lottery game play has declined significantly from both 1996 (85%) and 1993 (81%).

Charity raffles such as a hospital lottery are the second most popular past year gambling activity in BC. With one-in-two (49%) residents spending money on these charity raffles, they place well behind other lottery games, but well ahead of other activities like casino gambling (27%), private games (20%), sports or other events (18%) and speculative investments (13%). Gambling activities played by very few British Columbians include sports lottery games (5%), electronic gaming machines outside a casino (3%) and gambling on the Internet (2%).

Casino gambling shows the greatest increase in activity from previous surveys. Past year casino visits have risen by 11 percentage points from 1996 (16%) and nine points from 1993 (18%). Other changes from previous surveys include the following:

- Bingo gambling is stable from 1996, but down from 1993 (8% vs. 9% 1996, 13% 1993).
- Horse race gambling is up significantly from 1996, but basically unchanged from 1993 (8% vs. 5% 1996, 9% 1993).
- Sports lottery gambling is stable from 1996, but down from 1993 (5% vs. 6% 1996, 8% 1993).



4.3. *Weekly Gambling Activity*

The 1996 prevalence survey showed a dramatic drop in weekly gambling activity by British Columbians (47% 1996 vs. 65% 1993). That trend continues in the 2002 prevalence survey. Currently, four-in-ten (39%) British Columbians say they spend money on at least one gambling activity on a weekly basis. This is an eight percentage point drop from 1996 (47%) and a 26 point drop from 1993 (65%).

It is important to note that the definition of weekly gambling activity has changed in the 2002 survey. Currently, weekly gamblers are those who participate in at least one gambling activity three to five times a month, or more. Previously, weekly gamblers were defined as those who participated in at least one gambling activity during the previous week.

Despite the slight difference in definition, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that weekly gambling activity has decreased in British Columbia. The drop in weekly prevalence in the 2002 survey is consistent with the drops in lifetime and past year prevalence. Further, the drop is consistent with the trend noted in 1996.

Most weekly gamblers play lottery games. One-in-three (33%) British Columbians play a lottery game like 649, Daily 3, Scratch & Win, Keno or Pull-tabs on at least a weekly basis. No other gambling activity is played by more than three percent of BC residents on a weekly basis. As with lifetime and past year play, weekly lottery game is down significantly from previous surveys (33% vs. 40% 1996, 56% 1993).

Weekly Gambling Activities:
(3-5 times per month or more)
"Have you ever spent money on ...? About how often did you play ... in the past 12 months?"
Weekly
1996 (n=810)
1993 (n=1200)
Other lottery games like 6/49, Daily 3 33% 40% 56%
A private game 3%
Speculative investments 3%
Gambling at a casino 2% 1% 1%
Sports or other events 2%
Bingo 2% 2% 2%
A sports lottery game 2% 1% 2%
A charity raffle such as a hospital lottery 1%
Betting on a horse race 1% 1% 1%
Gambling on the Internet 1%
An electronic gaming machine outside of a casino <1%
Any other kind of game 1%
At least one activity 39% 47% 65%
(n=2500, base = all respondents)

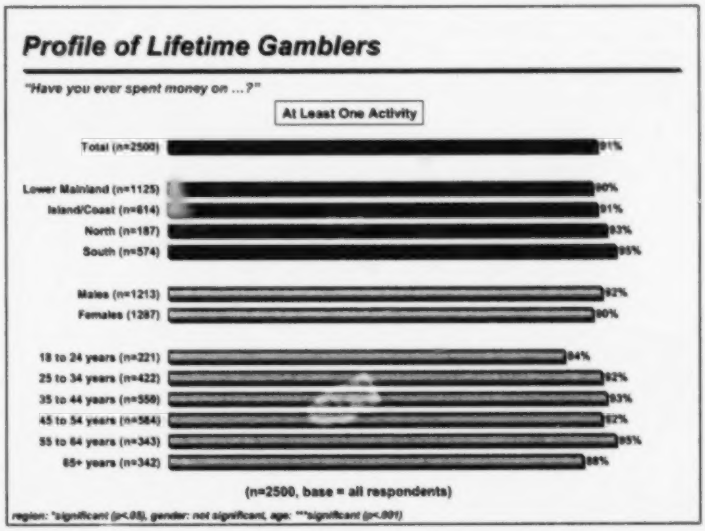
4.4. *Gambling Activity Profiles*

Profile of Lifetime Gamblers

With a lifetime prevalence rate of 91 percent in British Columbia, it is fair to say that the profile of lifetime gamblers very closely reflects the profile of the overall adult population. Nine-in-ten men and women, as well as nine-in-ten residents across all regions of the province have gambled at least once in their lifetime.

There are some differences by age groups, however, with lower prevalence rates at the extremes. Specifically the youngest age group (84%, 18 to 24 years) and the oldest age group (88%, 65+ years) are the least likely to have gambled.

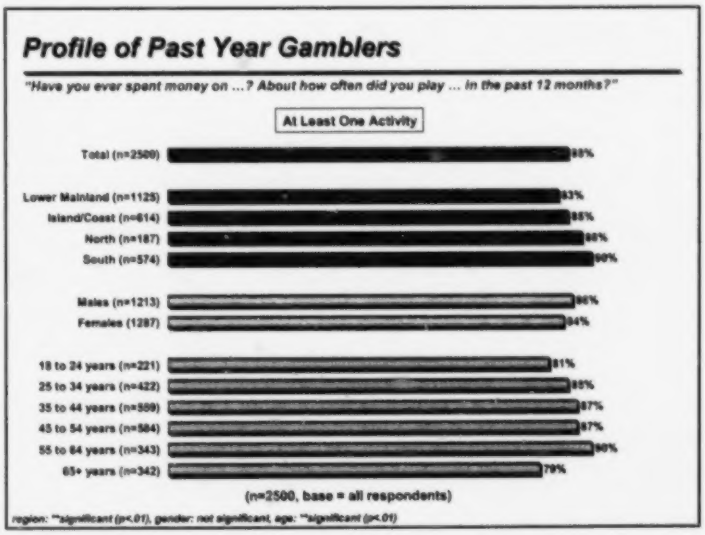
Other demographic groups slightly less likely than the overall population to have ever gambled included homemakers (80%), the unemployed (84%), the never-married (87%) and lower income residents (87%, <$30K).


Profile of Lifetime Gamblers
"Have you ever spent money on ...?"
At Least One Activity
Total (n=2500) 91%
Lower Mainland (n=1125) 90%
Island/Coast (n=614) 91%
North (n=187) 93%
South (n=574) 95%
Males (n=1213) 92%
Females (1287) 90%
18 to 24 years (n=221) 84%
25 to 34 years (n=422) 92%
35 to 44 years (n=558) 93%
45 to 54 years (n=584) 92%
55 to 64 years (n=343) 95%
65+ years (n=342) 88%
(n=2500, base = all respondents)
region: *significant (p<.05), gender: not significant, age: **significant (p<.001)

Profile of Past Year Gamblers

As with lifetime gamblers, past year gamblers closely reflect the overall adult population of BC. There are, however, small but statistically significant differences across regions and age groups. Regionally, past year gambling is highest in the South (90%) and lowest in the Lower Mainland (83%). And similar to lifetime gambling, past year gambling tapers off among both younger residents (81%, 18-24 years) and older residents (79%, 65+ years). The highest past year gambling rate is among residents 55 to 64 years (90%).

Other demographic differences include a lower past year prevalence among homemakers (75%) and a higher prevalence among those who are not married but living with a partner (93%). Residents with higher household incomes are also more likely to have gambled in the past year (90%, $60K+ vs. 79%, <$30K).


Profile of Past Year Gamblers
"Have you ever spent money on ...? About how often did you play ... in the past 12 months?"
At Least One Activity
Total (n=2500)
Lower Mainland (n=1125) 83%
Island/Coast (n=614)
North (n=187)
South (n=574) 90%
Males (n=1213)
Females (1287) 84%
18 to 24 years (n=221) 81%
25 to 34 years (n=422)
35 to 44 years (n=559)
45 to 54 years (n=584)
55 to 64 years (n=343)
65+ years (n=342) 79%
(n=2500, base = all respondents)
region: **significant (p<.01), gender: not significant, age: **significant (p<.01)

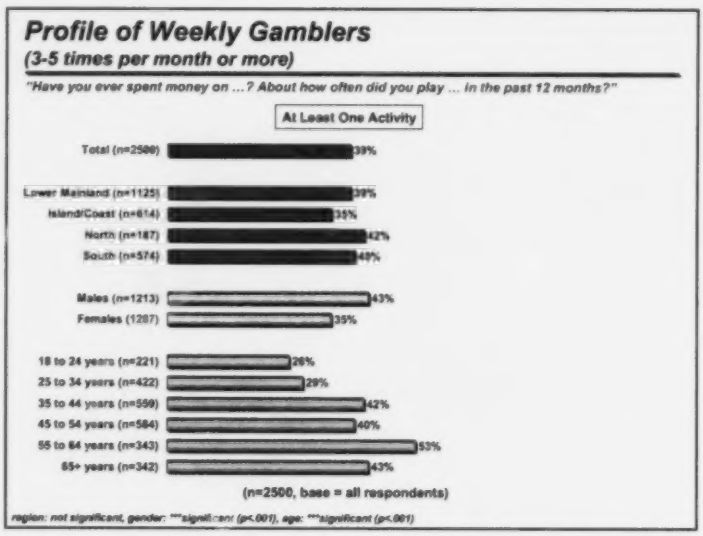
Profile of Weekly Gamblers

Weekly gambling varies widely by age group. The rate is highest among the pre-retirement age group of 55 to 64 years. A slight majority (53%) of this age group participate in at least one gambling activity on a weekly basis. As will be noted in the individual activity profiles, pre-retirement residents have the highest rates of past year activity for several activities, including casinos, charity raffles, horse racing, speculative investments and lottery games.

Weekly gambling activity drops to about four-in-ten middle-aged residents (41%, 35-54 years) and seniors (43%, 65+ years). Younger residents are substantially less likely to gamble on a weekly basis (28%, 18-34 years).

The profile of weekly gamblers is also distinguished by variables such as gender, household income, employment status, marital status and education. The main differences are as follows:

- Men are more likely than women to gamble on a weekly basis (43% vs. 35%).
- Higher income residents are more likely than lower income residents (43%, $60K+ vs. 36%, <$60K).
- By employment, retired residents (46%) are higher than average, while part time employed (31%) and students (22%) are lower than average.
- Other groups more likely to gamble on a weekly basis include those living with a partner (49%) and those with high school education or less (47%).


Profile of Weekly Gamblers
(3-5 times per month or more)
"Have you ever spent money on ...? About how often did you play ... in the past 12 months?"
At Least One Activity
Total (n=2500) 39%
Lower Mainland (n=1125) 39%
Island/Coast (n=614) 35%
North (n=187) 42%
South (n=574) 40%
Males (n=1213) 43%
Females (1287) 35%
18 to 24 years (n=221) 28%
25 to 34 years (n=422) 29%
35 to 44 years (n=559) 42%
45 to 54 years (n=584) 40%
55 to 64 years (n=343) 53%
65+ years (n=342) 43%
(n=2500, base = all respondents)
region: not significant, gender: ***significant (p<.001), age: ***significant (p<.001)

Profile of Participants in Various Gambling Activities

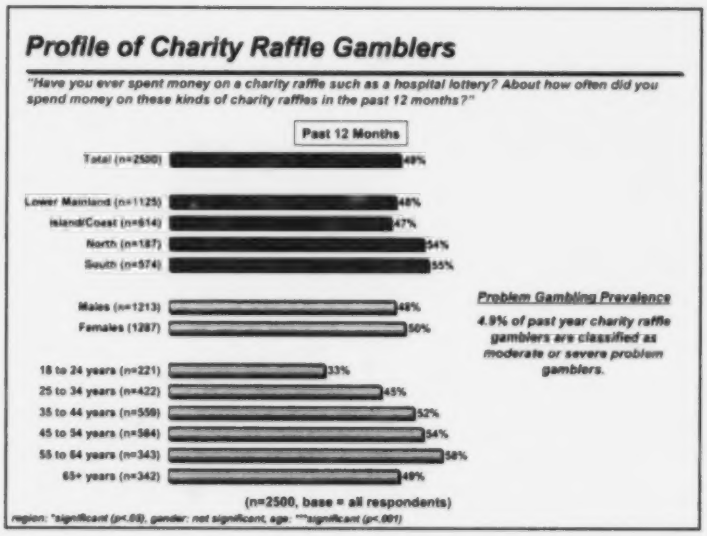
Profile of Charity Raffle Gamblers

Roughly one-in-two (49%) British Columbians have played a charity raffle such as a hospital lottery in the last 12 months. Rural residents in the South (55%) and North (54%) are more likely to have participated than Lower Mainland residents (48%) or Vancouver Island/Coast residents (47%).

The rate of participation in charity raffles is strongly associated with age group. A majority of those 35 to 64 years have played a charity raffle in the last year, with participation highest in the pre-retirement segment (58%, 55-64 years). Younger residents (33%, 18-24 years) are the least likely to have played a charity raffle in the last year. In a similar vein, students (34%) and the never-married (40%) are much less likely to have participated.

Charity raffle participation is also linked to socio-economic status, with less participation among lower income residents (39%, <$30K) and those with less than a high school education (42%).

It is estimated that 4.9 percent of past year charity raffle gamblers are moderate problem or severe problem gamblers. This is higher than the estimated problem gambling rate among all British Columbians (4.6%), although the difference is not statistically significant. *(For a more detailed explanation, see Section 5.0 "Problem Gambling in British Columbia".)*


Profile of Charity Raffle Gamblers
"Have you ever spent money on a charity raffle such as a hospital lottery? About how often did you spend money on these kinds of charity raffles in the past 12 months?"
Past 12 Months
Total (n=2500) 49%
Lower Mainland (n=1125) 48%
Island/Coast (n=614) 47%
North (n=187) 54%
South (n=574) 55%
Males (n=1213) 48%
Females (1287) 50%
18 to 24 years (n=221) 33%
25 to 34 years (n=422) 45%
35 to 44 years (n=559) 52%
45 to 54 years (n=584) 54%
55 to 64 years (n=343) 58%
65+ years (n=342) 49%
(n=2500, base = all respondents)
region: *significant (p<.05), gender: not significant, age: **significant (p<.001)
Problem Gambling Prevalence
4.9% of past year charity raffle gamblers are classified as moderate or severe problem gamblers.

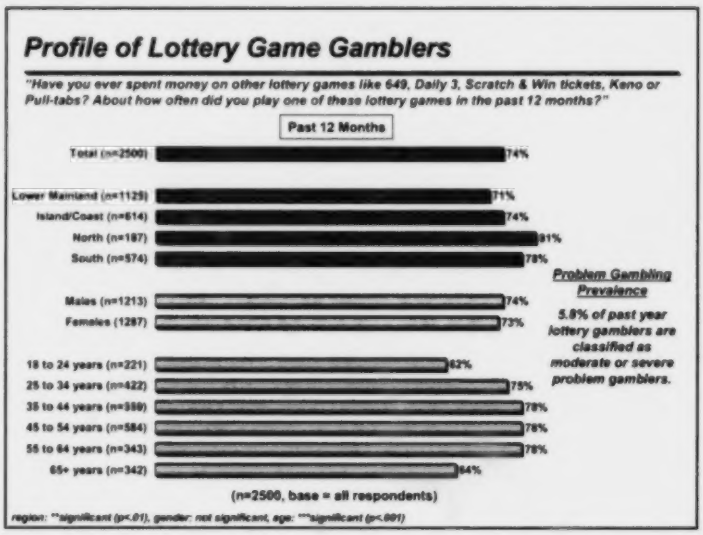
Profile of Lottery Game Gamblers

Three-in-four (74%) BC residents have played a lottery game like 649, Daily 3, Scratch & Win, Keno or Pull-tabs within the past 12 months. Lottery play is higher in the North (81%) and South (78%) than in the Lower Mainland (71%).

Lottery play is much lower than average among the youngest age group (62%, 18-24 years). Participation increases dramatically with the 25 to 34 year group (75%) and then stays steady at 78 percent through the 55 to 64 year group. Participation then drops back down with the senior age group (64%, 65+ years).

Past year lottery play also differs based on marital status, education and employment:

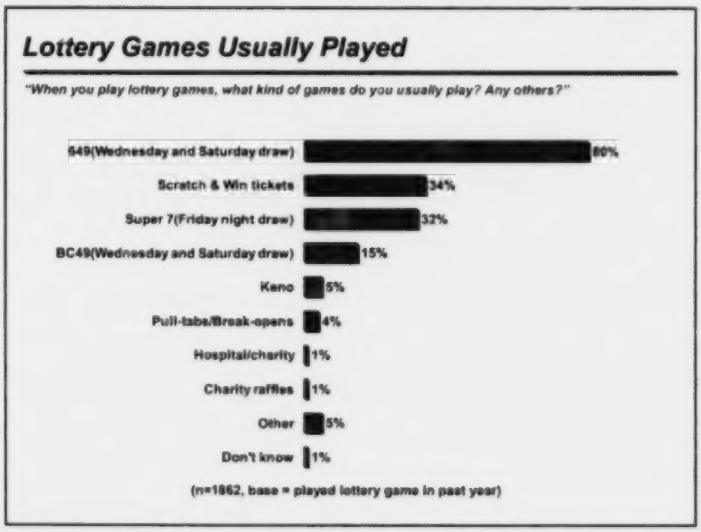
- Residents living with a partner (86%) are more likely to have played in the last year, especially compared to never-married residents (66%).
- University graduates are less likely to have played a lottery game in the past year (64%).
- Lottery play is higher than average with full-time employed residents (79%) and lower than average with retired residents (68%) and students (64%).


Profile of Lottery Game Gamblers
"Have you ever spent money on other lottery games like 649, Daily 3, Scratch & Win tickets, Keno or Pull-tabs? About how often did you play one of these lottery games in the past 12 months?"
Past 12 Months
Total (n=2500) 74%
Lower Mainland (n=1125) 71%
Island/Coast (n=614) 74%
North (n=187) 81%
South (n=574) 78%
Males (n=1213) 74%
Females (1287) 73%
18 to 24 years (n=221) 62%
25 to 34 years (n=422) 75%
35 to 44 years (n=559) 78%
45 to 54 years (n=584) 78%
55 to 64 years (n=343) 78%
65+ years (n=342) 64%
(n=2500, base = all respondents)
region: **significant (p<.01), gender: not significant, age: ***significant (p<.001)
Problem Gambling Prevalence
5.8% of past year lottery gamblers are classified as moderate or severe problem gamblers.

It is estimated that 5.8 percent of past year lottery players are moderate problem or severe problem gamblers. This is higher than the estimated problem gambling rate among all British Columbians (4.6%), although the difference is not statistically significant. *(For a more detailed explanation, see Section 5.0 "Problem Gambling in British Columbia".)*

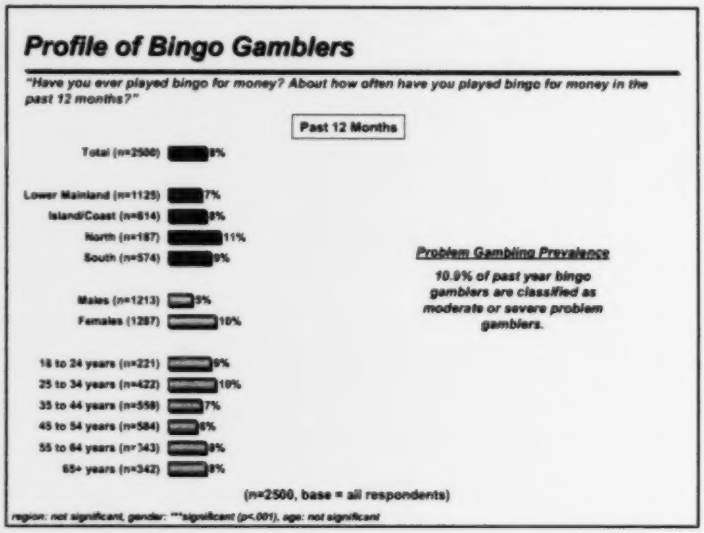
Lottery Games Usually Played

Fully eight-in-ten (80%) past year lottery game players say they usually play 649. This is more than twice as many lottery players who say they usually play the second most popular game – Scratch & Win tickets (34%). Super 7 is a close third place at 32 percent, followed by BC49 (15%), Keno (5%) and Pull-tabs (4%).


Lottery Games Usually Played
"When you play lottery games, what kind of games do you usually play? Any others?"
649(Wednesday and Saturday draw) 80%
Scratch & Win tickets 34%
Super 7(Friday night draw) 32%
BC49(Wednesday and Saturday draw) 15%
Keno 5%
Pull-tabs/Break-opens 4%
Hospital/charity 1%
Charity raffles 1%
Other 5%
Don't know 1%
(n=1962, base = played lottery game in past year)

Profile of Bingo Gamblers

Overall, eight percent of BC residents say they have played bingo for money in the past year. The rate of play is twice as high for women (10%) as it for men (5%). There is no significant relationship between bingo play and age or region of the province. There are, however, several other differences in participation rates worth noting:

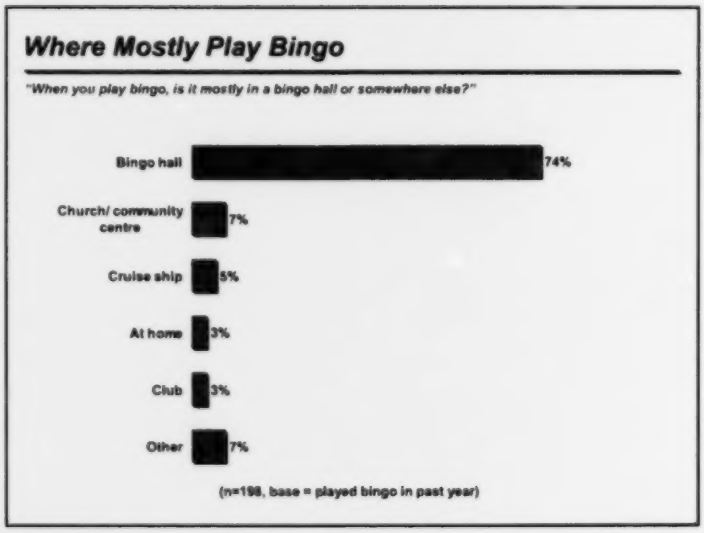

Profile of Bingo Gamblers
"Have you ever played bingo for money? About how often have you played bingo for money in the past 12 months?"
Past 12 Months
Total (n=2500) 8%
Lower Mainland (n=1125) 7%
Island/Coast (n=614) 8%
North (n=187) 11%
South (n=574) 9%
Males (n=1213) 5%
Females (1287) 10%
18 to 24 years (n=221) 9%
25 to 34 years (n=422) 10%
35 to 44 years (n=558) 7%
45 to 54 years (n=584) 6%
55 to 64 years (n=343) 9%
65+ years (n=342) 8%
Problem Gambling Prevalence
10.9% of past year bingo gamblers are classified as moderate or severe problem gamblers.
(n=2500, base = all respondents)
region: not significant, gender: ***significant (p<.001), age: not significant

- Residents living with a partner (12%) and separated-widowed-divorced residents (11%) are more likely to have played bingo in the last year than married residents (6%) or never-married residents (7%).
- Bingo play is higher with lower income residents (12%, <$30K) than it is with higher income residents (5%, $100K+).
- Those with less education are much more likely to have played bingo in the last year (12%, high school or less vs. 5%, college/university degree).
- Interestingly, only one percent of self-employed residents have played bingo for money in the last year.

It is estimated that 10.9 percent of past year bingo players are moderate problem or severe problem gamblers. This is statistically higher than the estimated problem gambling rate among all British Columbians (4.6%, $p<.01$). *(For a more detailed explanation, see Section 5.0 "Problem Gambling in British Columbia".)*

Where Mostly Play Bingo

Most past year bingo players participate at a bingo hall (74%) rather than some other location like a church/community centre (7%), a cruise ship (5%), at home (3%) or in a club (3%).

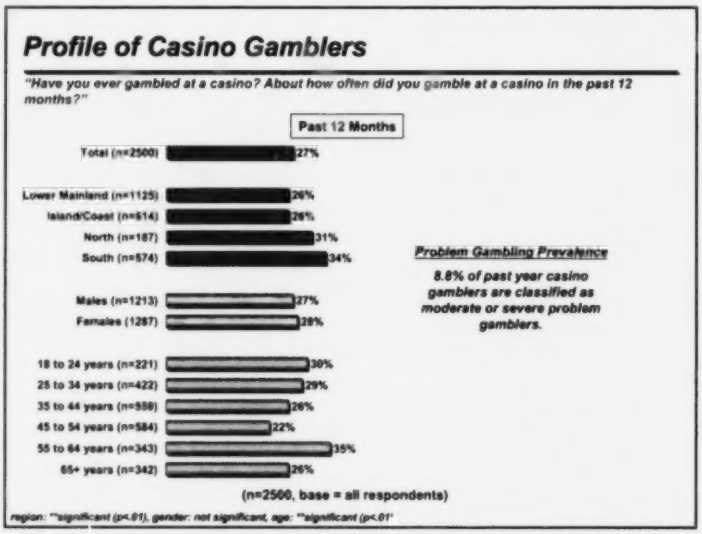

Where Mostly Play Bingo
"When you play bingo, is it mostly in a bingo hall or somewhere else?"
Bingo hall 74%
Church/ community centre 7%
Cruise ship 5%
At home 3%
Club 3%
Other 7%
(n=198, base = played bingo in past year)

Profile of Casino Gamblers

Roughly one-in-four (27%) BC residents has gambled at a casino in the past year. As mentioned, this is up a statistically significant 11 points from the 1996 prevalence survey.

There is a strong relationship between age and casino gambling. Past year participation sits at about three-in-ten (28%) residents under the age of 45 years. It then falls to two-in-ten (22%) residents in the 45 to 54 years group. This drop is reversed, however, with the pre-retirement age group. Thirty-five percent of the 55 to 64 year old group has gambled at a casino in the past year, the highest rate of any age group. Participation then drops again with seniors (26%, 65+ years).

Past year casino gambling also differs by provincial region. Specifically, casino gambling is higher in the South (34%) and North (31%) than in the Lower Mainland (26%) or Island/Coast (26%).


Profile of Casino Gamblers
"Have you ever gambled at a casino? About how often did you gamble at a casino in the past 12 months?"
Past 12 Months
Total (n=2500) 27%
Lower Mainland (n=1125) 26%
Island/Coast (n=514) 26%
North (n=187) 31%
South (n=574) 34%
Males (n=1213) 27%
Females (1287) 28%
18 to 24 years (n=221) 30%
25 to 34 years (n=422) 29%
35 to 44 years (n=588) 26%
45 to 54 years (n=584) 22%
55 to 64 years (n=343) 35%
65+ years (n=342) 26%
(n=2500, base = all respondents)
Problem Gambling Prevalence
8.8% of past year casino gamblers are classified as moderate or severe problem gamblers.
region: **significant (p<.01), gender: not significant, age: **significant (p<.01

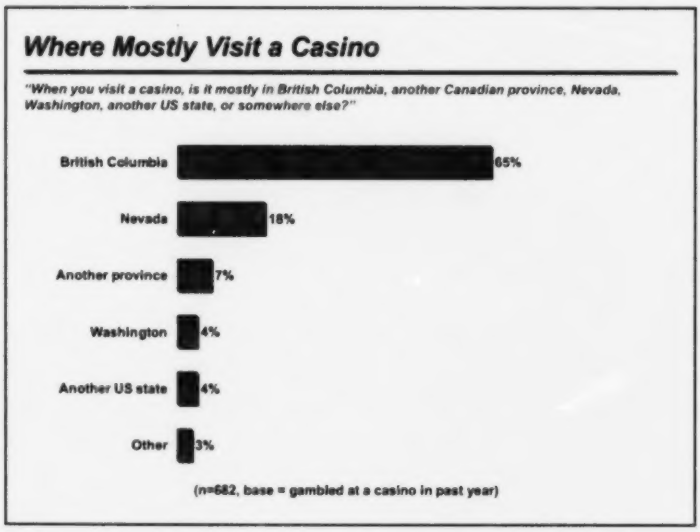
Other demographic differences in past year casino gambling include the following:

- Residents with high school or less education are more likely than average to have visited a casino (32%), while university graduates are less likely (23%).
- Both self-employed (15%) and part-time employed (20%) are less likely than average to have casino gambled in the past year.

It is estimated that 8.8 percent of past year casino gamblers are moderate problem or severe problem gamblers. This is statistically higher than the estimated problem gambling rate among all British Columbians (4.6%, $p<.001$). *(For a more detailed explanation, see Section 5.0 "Problem Gambling in British Columbia".)*

Where Mostly Visit a Casino

British Columbia is the main casino destination for two-thirds (65%) of past year casino gamblers. Nevada is the second choice at 18 percent, followed by other Canadian provinces (7%), Washington State (4%) and other US states (4%).

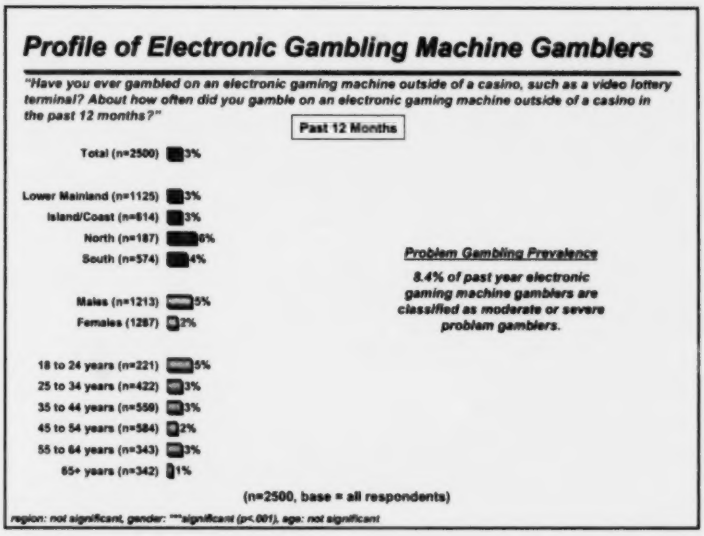

Where Mostly Visit a Casino
"When you visit a casino, is it mostly in British Columbia, another Canadian province, Nevada, Washington, another US state, or somewhere else?"
British Columbia 65%
Nevada 18%
Another province 7%
Washington 4%
Another US state 4%
Other 3%
(n=682, base = gambled at a casino in past year)

Profile of Electronic Gambling Machine Gamblers

Only three percent of the BC public report spending money on an electronic gambling machine outside of a casino in the last year. As there are no legal electronic gambling machines outside of casinos in BC, it can presumed that these gamblers are either playing out of province machines or "gray" machines located in BC.

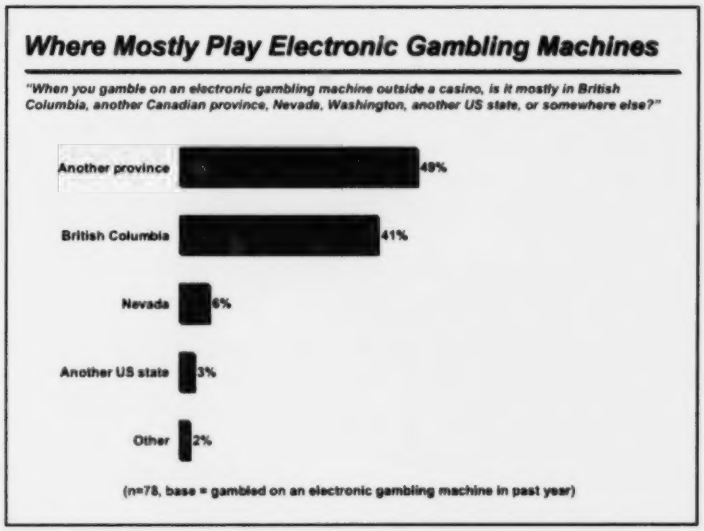
Men are more likely than women to play electronic gambling machines outside of a casino (5% vs. 2%). Participation is not linked to region of the province or age group.

It is estimated that 8.4 percent of past year electronic gaming machine gamblers are moderate problem or severe problem gamblers. This is higher than the estimated problem gambling rate among all British Columbians (4.6%), although the difference is not statistically significant. *(For a more detailed explanation, see Section 5.0 "Problem Gambling in British Columbia".)*


Profile of Electronic Gambling Machine Gamblers
"Have you ever gambled on an electronic gaming machine outside of a casino, such as a video lottery terminal? About how often did you gamble on an electronic gaming machine outside of a casino in the past 12 months?"
Past 12 Months
Total (n=2500) 3%
Lower Mainland (n=1125) 3%
Island/Coast (n=514) 3%
North (n=187) 6%
South (n=574) 4%
Males (n=1213) 5%
Females (1287) 2%
18 to 24 years (n=221) 5%
25 to 34 years (n=422) 3%
35 to 44 years (n=559) 3%
45 to 54 years (n=584) 2%
55 to 64 years (n=343) 3%
65+ years (n=342) 1%
Problem Gambling Prevalence
8.4% of past year electronic gaming machine gamblers are classified as moderate or severe problem gamblers.
(n=2500, base = all respondents)
region: not significant, gender: ***significant (p<.001), age: not significant

Where Mostly Play Electronic Gambling Machines

Four-in-ten (41%) past year electronic gambling machine players say they played a machine inside BC. Given that there are no legal machines outside casinos in BC, these players are either gambling on a "gray" machine or they misinterpreted the question. If we assume that these are all "gray" machines, it means that about one percent of all BC residents played a "gray" machine in the last year (1% = 41% of 3%).

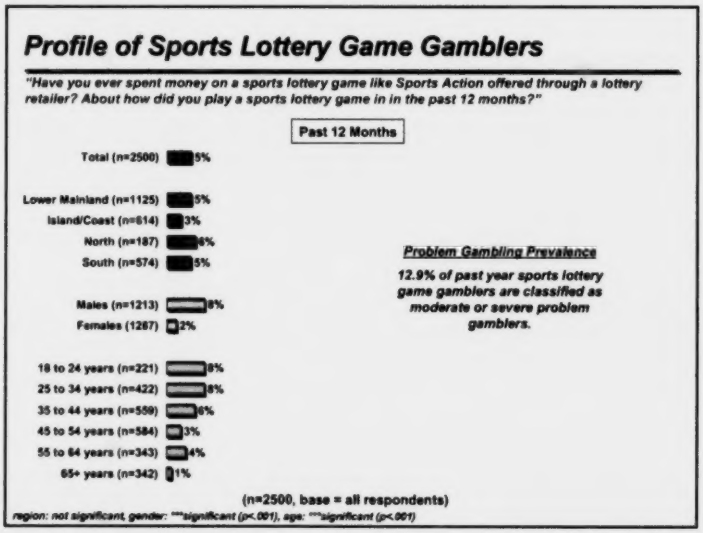

Where Mostly Play Electronic Gambling Machines
"When you gamble on an electronic gambling machine outside a casino, is it mostly in British Columbia, another Canadian province, Nevada, Washington, another US state, or somewhere else?"
Another province 49%
British Columbia 41%
Nevada 6%
Another US state 3%
Other 2%
(n=78, base = gambled on an electronic gambling machine in past year)

Profile of Sports Lottery Game Gamblers

Five percent of adult British Columbians played a sports lottery game offered through a lottery retailer in the last year. Participation in sports lottery games is linked to both gender and age, with prevalence higher among men (8% vs. 2%, women) and among the young (8%, 18-34 years vs. 3%, 45+ years).

Other relationships are likely linked to gender and age differences:

- Past year participation is higher than average among the never-married (8%) and lower than average among widowed/ divorced/separated (3%).
- Homemakers (1%) and retired residents (2%) are less likely to have played a sports lottery in the past year.

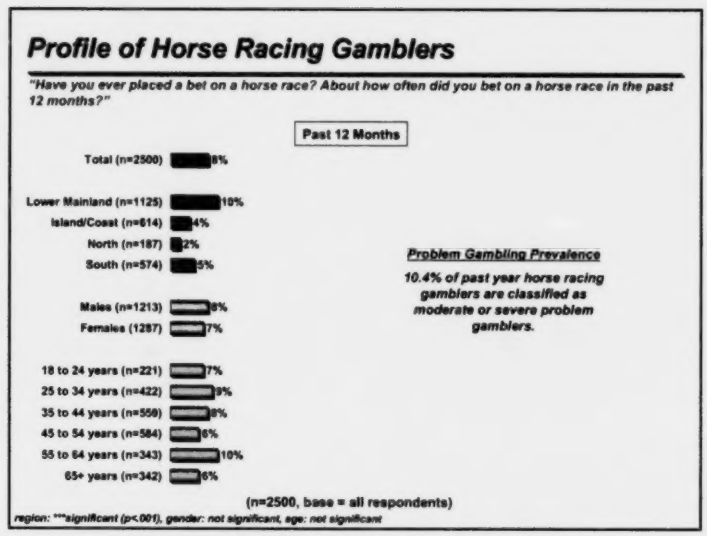

Profile of Sports Lottery Game Gamblers
"Have you ever spent money on a sports lottery game like Sports Action offered through a lottery retailer? About how did you play a sports lottery game in in the past 12 months?"
Past 12 Months
Total (n=2500) 5%
Lower Mainland (n=1125) 5%
Island/Coast (n=614) 3%
North (n=187) 6%
South (n=574) 5%
Males (n=1213) 8%
Females (1287) 2%
18 to 24 years (n=221) 8%
25 to 34 years (n=422) 8%
35 to 44 years (n=559) 6%
45 to 54 years (n=584) 3%
55 to 64 years (n=343) 4%
65+ years (n=342) 1%
Problem Gambling Prevalence
12.9% of past year sports lottery game gamblers are classified as moderate or severe problem gamblers.
(n=2500, base = all respondents)
region: not significant, gender: ***significant (p<.001), age: ***significant (p<.001)

It is estimated that 12.9 percent of past year sports lottery gamblers are moderate problem or severe problem gamblers. This is statistically higher than the estimated problem gambling rate among all British Columbians (4.6%, $p<.01$). (*For a more detailed explanation, see Section 5.0 "Problem Gambling in British Columbia".)*

Profile of Horse Racing Gamblers

About one-in-twelve (8%) British Columbians say they bet money on a horse race in the last year. A significant regional gap exists, with prevalence much higher in the Lower Mainland (10%) than in the rest of the province (4%). This difference is clearly due to the number of venues in the Lower Mainland compared to the rest of the province.

It is estimated that 10.4 percent of past year horse racing gamblers are moderate problem or severe problem gamblers. This is statistically higher than the estimated problem gambling rate among all British Columbians (4.6%, $p<.05$). (*For a more detailed explanation, see Section 5.0 "Problem Gambling in British Columbia".)*


Profile of Horse Racing Gamblers
"Have you ever placed a bet on a horse race? About how often did you bet on a horse race in the past 12 months?"
Past 12 Months
Total (n=2500) 8%
Lower Mainland (n=1125) 10%
Island/Coast (n=614) 4%
North (n=187) 2%
South (n=574) 5%
Males (n=1213) 8%
Females (1287) 7%
18 to 24 years (n=221) 7%
25 to 34 years (n=422) 9%
35 to 44 years (n=559) 8%
45 to 54 years (n=584) 6%
55 to 64 years (n=343) 10%
65+ years (n=342) 6%
Problem Gambling Prevalence
10.4% of past year horse racing gamblers are classified as moderate or severe problem gamblers.
(n=2500, base = all respondents)
region: ***significant (p<.001), gender: not significant, age: not significant

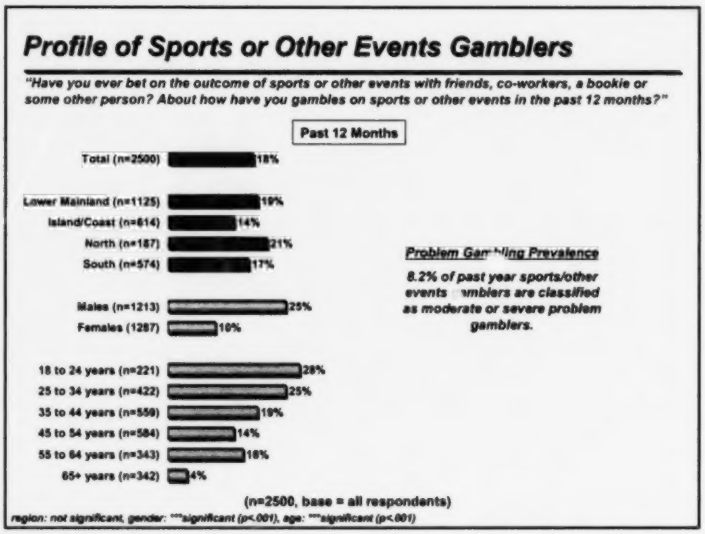
Profile of Sports or Other Event Gamblers

Nearly two-in-ten (18%) BC residents say they bet on the outcome of sports or other events with friends, co-workers, a bookie or someone else in the past 12 months. Similar to sports lottery participation, the rate of gambling on these events is higher among men (25% vs. 10%, women) and younger British Columbians (26%, 18-34 years vs. 14%, 35+ years).

Other demographic differences in past year sports gambling include the following:

- Past year participation is higher than average among the never-married (25%) and lower than average among widowed/divorced/separated (11%).
- Homemakers (6%) and retired residents (8%) are less likely to have played a sports lottery in the past year. Full-time employed residents (24%) are more likely to have spent money on this type of gambling activity.

It is estimated that 8.2 percent of past year sports/other events gamblers are moderate problem or severe problem gamblers. This is statistically higher than the estimated problem gambling rate among all British Columbians (4.6%, $p<.05$). (*For a more detailed explanation, see Section 5.0 "Problem Gambling in British Columbia".)*


Profile of Sports or Other Events Gamblers
"Have you ever bet on the outcome of sports or other events with friends, co-workers, a bookie or some other person? About how have you gambles on sports or other events in the past 12 months?"
Past 12 Months
Total (n=2500) 18%
Lower Mainland (n=1125) 19%
Island/Coast (n=614) 14%
North (n=187) 21%
South (n=574) 17%
Males (n=1213) 25%
Females (1287) 10%
18 to 24 years (n=221) 28%
25 to 34 years (n=422) 25%
35 to 44 years (n=558) 19%
45 to 54 years (n=584) 14%
55 to 64 years (n=343) 18%
65+ years (n=342) 4%
Problem Gambling Prevalence
8.2% of past year sports/other events gamblers are classified as moderate or severe problem gamblers.
(n=2500, base = all respondents)
region: not significant, gender: ***significant (p<.001), age: ***significant (p<.001)

Profile of Private Game Gamblers

Private games rank behind only lotteries, charity raffles and casinos as the most prevalent form of past year gambling in the province. Two-in-ten (20%) BC residents say they have gambled on a private game or on a game of skill within the past 12 months.

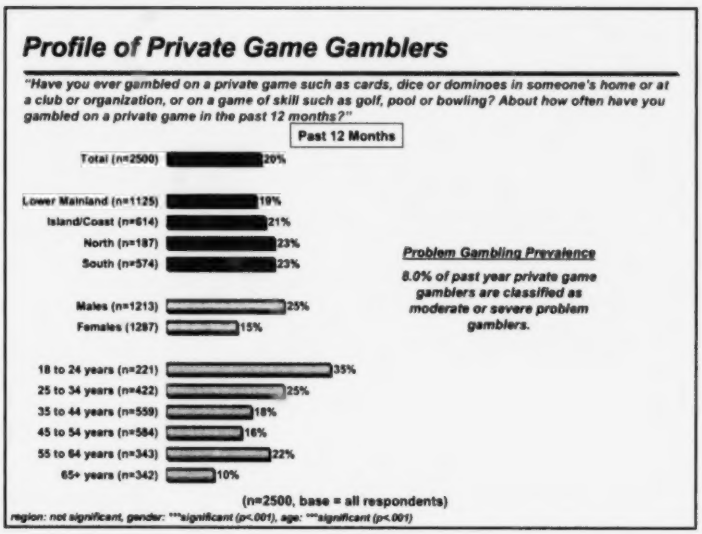
Gambling on private games is statistically linked to gender and age. By gender, men are more likely than women to have participated (25% vs. 15%). By age, the highest rate of play is with the youngest age segment (35%, 18-24 years). Participation then falls across the next three age segments until it hits 16 percent with the 45 to 54 group. At this point, private game participation spikes up with the pre-retirement group (22%, 55-64 years), before dropping to the lowest rate with seniors (10%, 65+ years).

An interesting finding is that students (30%) are much more likely than other British Columbians to have bet on a private game in the past year. While this makes sense given the younger age profile of private game participants, the same logic did not hold with the two other activities skewed heavily toward younger British Columbians; sports lottery games and sporting event betting.

Other demographic differences in past year gambling on private games include the following:

- Past year participation is higher with the never married (29%) and those living with a partner (28%) than it is with married residents (17%) and among the widowed/divorced/separated (14%).
- Higher income residents are more likely than lower income residents to have played a private game (26%, $60K+ vs. 17%, <$60K).

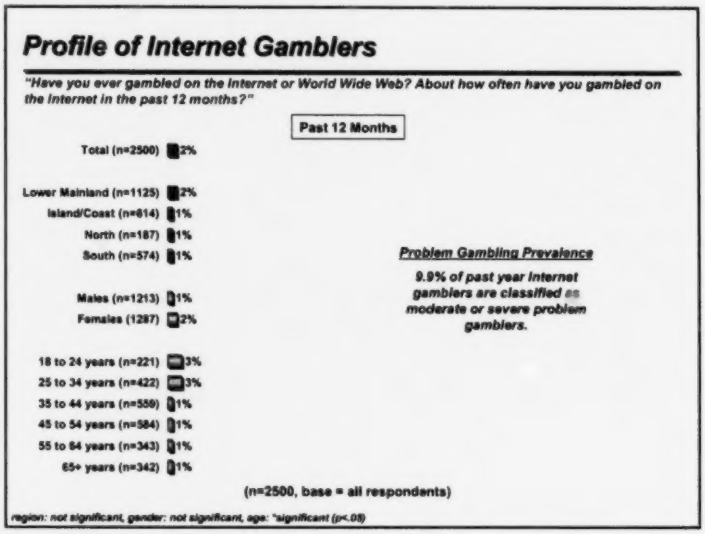
It is estimated that 8.0 percent of past year private game gamblers are moderate problem or severe problem gamblers. This is statistically higher than the estimated problem gambling rate among all British Columbians (4.6%, $p<.01$). *(For a more detailed explanation, see Section 5.0 "Problem Gambling in British Columbia".)*


Profile of Private Game Gamblers
"Have you ever gambled on a private game such as cards, dice or dominoes in someone's home or at a club or organization, or on a game of skill such as golf, pool or bowling? About how often have you gambled on a private game in the past 12 months?"
Past 12 Months
Total (n=2500) 20%
Lower Mainland (n=1125) 19%
Island/Coast (n=614) 21%
North (n=187) 23%
South (n=574) 23%
Males (n=1213) 25%
Females (1287) 15%
18 to 24 years (n=221) 35%
25 to 34 years (n=422) 25%
35 to 44 years (n=559) 18%
45 to 54 years (n=584) 16%
55 to 64 years (n=343) 22%
65+ years (n=342) 10%
Problem Gambling Prevalence
8.0% of past year private game gamblers are classified as moderate or severe problem gamblers.
(n=2500, base = all respondents)
region: not significant, gender: ***significant (p<.001), age: ***significant (p<.001)

Profile of Internet Gamblers

Two percent of BC residents say they gambled on the Internet or World Wide Web in the last year. There is a statistically significant relationship between Internet gambling and age, with younger residents more likely to participate (3%, 18-34 years vs. 1% 35+ years).

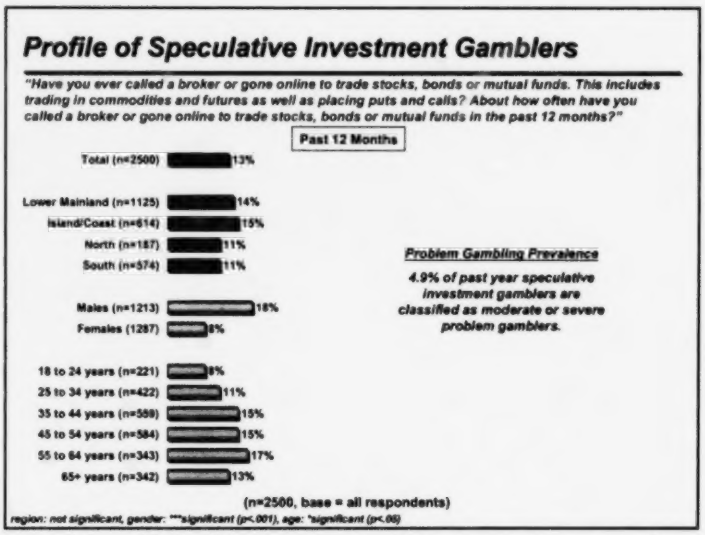
It is estimated that 9.9 percent of past year Internet gamblers are moderate problem or severe problem gamblers. This is higher than the estimated problem gambling rate among all British Columbians (4.6%), although the difference is not statistically significant. *(For a more detailed explanation, see Section 5.0 "Problem Gambling in British Columbia".)*


Profile of Internet Gamblers
"Have you ever gambled on the Internet or World Wide Web? About how often have you gambled on the Internet in the past 12 months?"
Past 12 Months
Total (n=2500) 2%
Lower Mainland (n=1125) 2%
Island/Coast (n=614) 1%
North (n=187) 1%
South (n=574) 1%
Males (n=1213) 1%
Females (1287) 2%
18 to 24 years (n=221) 3%
25 to 34 years (n=422) 3%
35 to 44 years (n=559) 1%
45 to 54 years (n=584) 1%
55 to 64 years (n=343) 1%
65+ years (n=342) 1%
Problem Gambling Prevalence
9.9% of past year Internet gamblers are classified as moderate or severe problem gamblers.
(n=2500, base = all respondents)
region: not significant, gender: not significant, age: *significant (p<.05)

Profile of Speculative Investment Gamblers

Thirteen percent of British Columbians have called a broker or gone online to trade stocks, bonds or mutual funds in the last year. Men are more than twice as likely as women to have engaged in this activity (18% vs. 8%). There is also a link with household income as higher income household are much more likely to have participated in this type of investing (22%, $60K+ vs. 8%, <$60K). Household income is also the likely driver of differences by education and employment:

- University graduates are more likely than average to have purchased these investments (22%), while those with high school or less education are less likely than average (7%).
- Homemakers (5%), unemployed residents (6%) and students (8%) are all less likely than average to have spent money on these speculative investments in the past year.


Profile of Speculative Investment Gamblers
"Have you ever called a broker or gone online to trade stocks, bonds or mutual funds. This includes trading in commodities and futures as well as placing puts and calls? About how often have you called a broker or gone online to trade stocks, bonds or mutual funds in the past 12 months?"
Past 12 Months
Total (n=2500) 13%
Lower Mainland (n=1125) 14%
Island/Coast (n=614) 15%
North (n=187) 11%
South (n=574) 11%
Males (n=1213) 18%
Females (1287) 8%
18 to 24 years (n=221) 9%
25 to 34 years (n=422) 11%
35 to 44 years (n=559) 15%
45 to 54 years (n=584) 15%
55 to 64 years (n=343) 17%
65+ years (n=342) 13%
Problem Gambling Prevalence
4.9% of past year speculative investment gamblers are classified as moderate or severe problem gamblers.
(n=2500, base = all respondents)
region: not significant, gender: ***significant (p<.001), age: *significant (p<.05)

It is estimated that 4.9 percent of past year speculative investment gamblers are moderate problem or severe problem gamblers. This is higher than the estimated problem gambling rate among all British Columbians (4.6%), although the difference is not statistically significant. *(For a more detailed explanation, see Section 5.0 "Problem Gambling in British Columbia".)*

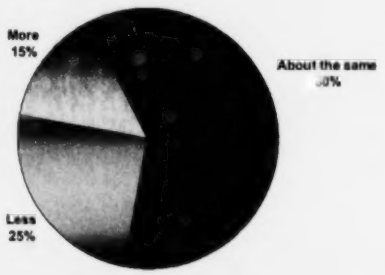
4.5. *Gambling Behaviours*

Gambling Versus Five Years Ago

Lifetime, past year and weekly figures all point to a decline in the prevalence of gambling activity in British Columbia since the 1996 and 1993 surveys. This decline is supported by personal perceptions of changes in gambling participation over the past five years. While a majority (60%) of lifetime gamblers says they are doing about the same amount of gambling as before, the direction of change among the other 40 percent is slanted in favour of those who are doing less gambling. Overall 25 percent of those who have ever gambled say they are doing less gambling today than five years ago, compared to 15 percent who say they are doing more gambling.

Gambling Versus Five Years Ago

"Compared to five years ago, would you say that today you gamble more, less or about the same amount as before?"



(n=2134, base = gambled in last year)

A personal perception of doing less gambling is strongest among lower income residents (35%, <$30K), those with less than a high school education (35%), Island/Coast residents (32%) and retired residents (29%).

A potentially alarming finding is that 44 percent of the youngest age group (18-24 years) say they are gambling more than five years ago. On further reflection, however, this finding makes perfect sense given that most of the respondents in this age group could not gamble legally five years ago.

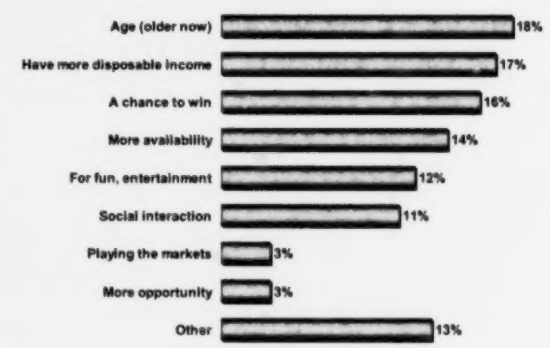
Reasons for Gambling More

Those residents who are gambling more than five years ago were asked to indicate—on an open-ended basis—the main reason for this change. It appears that there are a wide variety of reasons for increased gambling activity, with no one single issue standing out from the rest.

Some of the reasons involve a change in personal situation, such as becoming old enough to gamble legally (18%), having more disposable income (17%) and having more opportunities to gamble because of travel (3%). Other reasons involve motivations for participating including a chance to win (16%), for fun and entertainment (12%) and for social interaction with family and friends (11%). A final reason for doing more gambling is the increased availability of gambling opportunities in BC (14%).

Reasons for Gambling More

"What is the main reason you are gambling more than five years ago?"

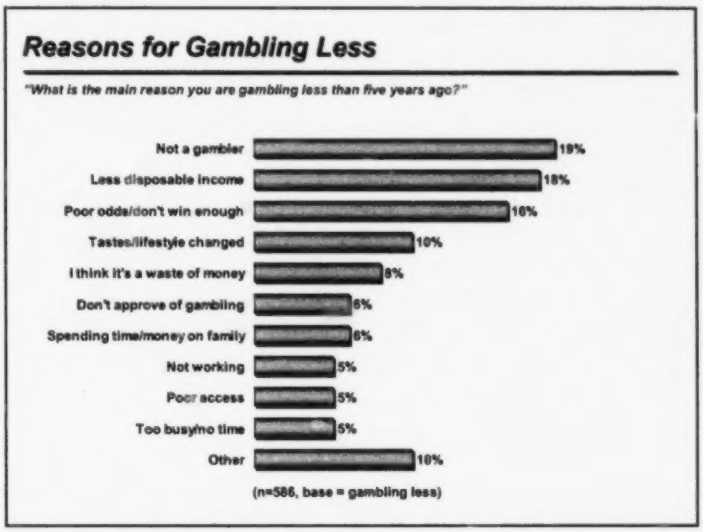


(n=325, base = gambling more)

Reasons for Gambling Less

Those residents who are gambling less than five years ago were also asked to indicate—on an open-ended basis—the main reason for this change. Again, a variety of explanations are offered with no single reason more important than the others.

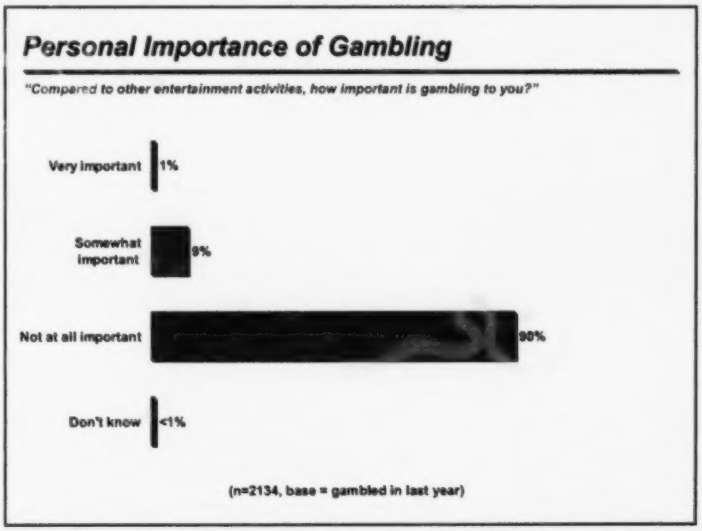
Some residents are gambling less because they have less income (18%) or they are not working (5%). Some say their lifestyle has changed (10%), they want to spend their time (and money) on their family (6%) or they are too busy with other activities (5%). Some say they have no interest in gambling (19%), while others say the odds of winning are poor (16%) or it's a waste of money (8%). Minor reasons for gambling less include disapproving of gambling (6%) and having poor access to gambling opportunities (5%).


Reasons for Gambling Less
"What is the main reason you are gambling less than five years ago?"
Not a gambler 19%
Less disposable income 18%
Poor odds/don't win enough 16%
Tastes/lifestyle changed 10%
I think it's a waste of money 8%
Don't approve of gambling 6%
Spending time/money on family 6%
Not working 5%
Poor access 5%
Too busy/no time 5%
Other 10%
(n=586, base = gambling less)

Personal Importance of Gambling

Although many BC residents gamble, gambling does not appear to be an important entertainment activity for British Columbians. Nine-in-ten (90%) past year gamblers say that gambling is not at all important compared to other entertainment activities. Nine percent think gambling is somewhat important and another one percent think it is very important.

Overall, 10 percent of past year gamblers say that gambling is very important (1%) or somewhat important (9%) to them. This rate increases significantly among past year participants in some gambling activities.


Personal Importance of Gambling
"Compared to other entertainment activities, how important is gambling to you?"
Very important 1%
Somewhat important 9%
Not at all important 90%
Don't know <1%
(n=2134, base = gambled in last year)

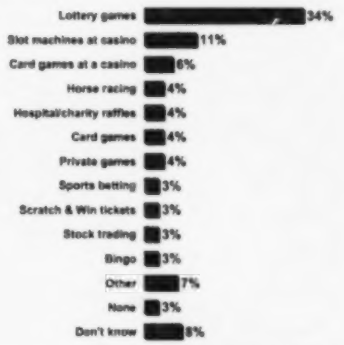
- Albeit on a very small sample size (n=33), 46 percent of Internet gamblers say that gambling is important.
- Gambling is also more likely to be important to past year sports lottery gamblers (30%), horse racing gamblers (27%) and bingo gamblers (22%).
- Again, on a small sample size (n=78), 21 percent of electronic gaming machine players say that gambling is important.

Favourite Gambling Activity

Past year gamblers were asked to select their favourite gambling activity from all the activities discussed in the questionnaire. Consistent with gambling participation, lottery games (34%) are the number one favourite gambling activity. Casino slot machines are a distant second favourite (11%) followed by casino card games (6%). No other activity was selected by more than four percent of past year gamblers.

Favourite Gambling Activity

"Thinking about the sorts of activities we have discussed, can you tell me which is your favourite gambling activity?"



(n=2134, base = gambled in last year)

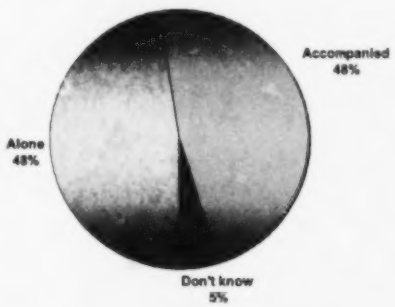
Gambling Alone or Accompanied

British Columbians are evenly divided in their habit for gambling alone or accompanied by others when they participate in their favourite gambling activity. Forty-eight percent of past year gamblers say they usually go alone and the same percentage say someone usually accompanies them.

Gambling appears to be a much more social activity for younger BC residents. Two-thirds (68%) of the youngest age group (18-24 years) say they are usually accompanied when they participate in their favourite activity. Similarly, 72 percent of students say they are usually accompanied when they gamble on their favourite activity.

Gambling Alone or Accompanied

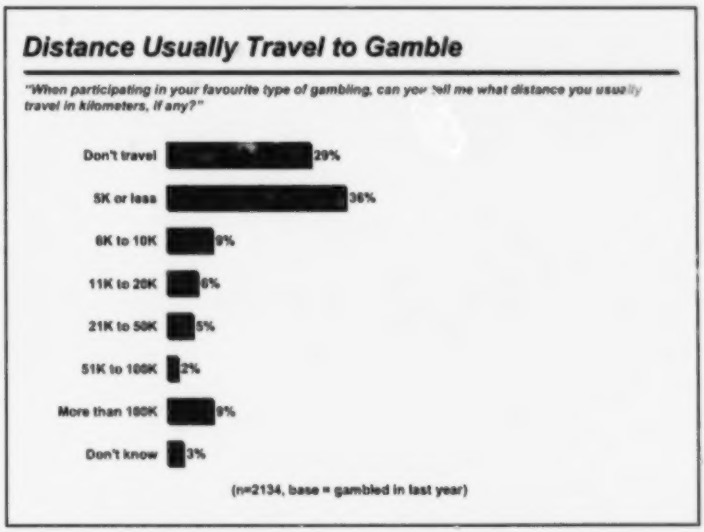
"When participating in your favorite type of gambling, does anyone usually accompany you or do you usually go alone?"



(n=2134, base = gambled in last year)

Distance Travelled

Most British Columbians don't have to travel a long distance to take part in their favourite gambling activity. Two-thirds (65%) of past year gamblers say they travel five kilometers or less and three-quarters (74%) travel no more than 10 kilometers. Roughly one-in-ten (11%) past year gamblers usually travel more than 50 kilometers to participate in their favourite gambling activity.


Distance Usually Travel to Gamble
"When participating in your favourite type of gambling, can you tell me what distance you usually travel in kilometers, if any?"
Don't travel 29%
5K or less 36%
6K to 10K 9%
11K to 20K 6%
21K to 50K 5%
51K to 100K 2%
More than 100K 9%
Don't know 3%
(n=2134, base = gambled in last year)

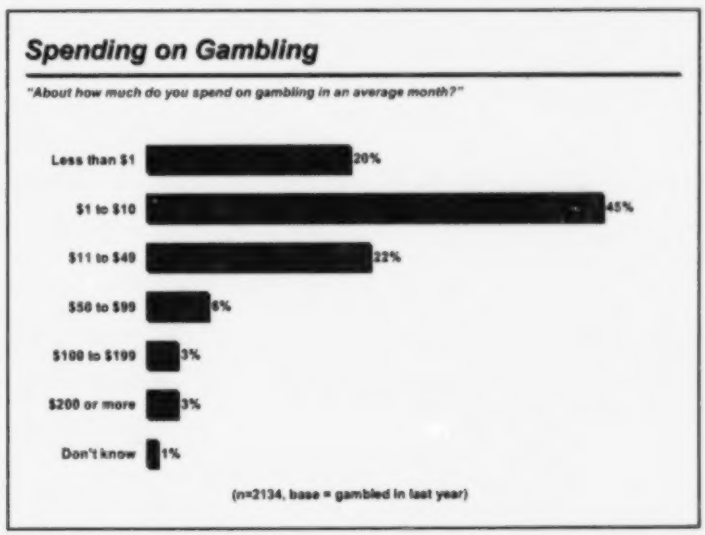
Spending on Gambling

Most past year gamblers spend only a small amount on gambling in average month. Two-thirds (65%) report spending an average of $10 or less per month. An additional 22 percent say they spend between $11 and $49 in an average month. About one-in-ten (12%) past year gamblers spend $50 or more per month, including 6 percent who spend $100 or more.

Men are more likely than women to spend an average of $50 or more in a typical month (16% vs. 10%). Heavier spending ($50+) is also more common among less educated gamblers (19%, high school or less), higher income gamblers (19%, $100K+) and older gamblers (18%, 55+ years and 18%, retired).

The likelihood of spending more heavily ($50+) is also much higher with participants in certain activities. For example, 61 percent of the small sample of past year Internet gamblers (n=33) report spending $50 or more per month on all their gambling activities. Other past year activities with higher rates of heavy spending include the following:

- Horse racing gamblers (39% spend $50 or more per month on all activities)
- Sports lottery gamblers (36%)
- Electronic gambling machine players (34%, albeit on a small sample n=78)
- Bingo gamblers (31%)
- Casino gamblers (27%)


Spending on Gambling
"About how much do you spend on gambling in an average month?"
Less than $1 20%
$1 to $10 45%
$11 to $49 22%
$50 to $99 6%
$100 to $199 3%
$200 or more 3%
Don't know 1%
(n=2134, base = gambled in last year)

Largest Loss in a Day

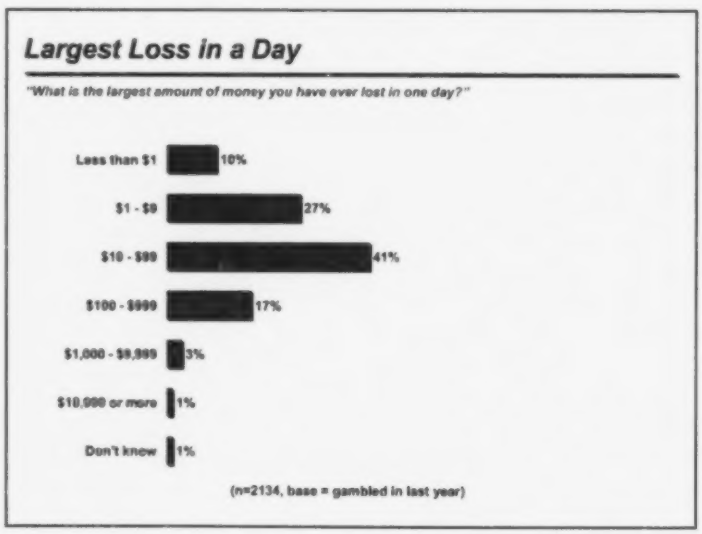
Eight-in-ten (78%) past year gamblers say they have never lost as much as $100 in a single day. In fact, four-in-ten (37%) say they have never lost as much as $10 in a day. Conversely, two-in-ten (22%) gamblers have lost $100 or more in a day, including four percent who have lost more than $1,000 in a day.

There are some wide variations in terms of incurring large losses ($100+) across demographic and socio-economic variables.

- Gamblers from the highest household income category are the most likely to have suffered a large loss (36%, $100K+). Gamblers in the two lowest income groups are much less likely to have had a large loss (17%, <$60K).
- Men are twice as likely as women to have a large loss (28% vs. 14%).
- Lower Mainland gamblers are more likely to have had a large single day loss (24% vs. 17% rest of BC).
- By age, the pre-retirement group is the most likely to have had a $100+ loss (26%, 55-64 years). The youngest age group is least likely (13%, 18-24 years).
- Self-employed (27%) and retired (24%) gamblers are more likely to have had a large loss. Part time employed (13%) and students (13%) are less likely to have had a large loss.

Even larger variations can be found by looking at past year participation by gambling activity. Past year participants in some gambling activities are more likely to have lost $100 or more in a single day, including:

- Internet gamblers (53% lost $100 or more in a single day, albeit on a small sample n=33)
- Sports lottery gamblers (47%)
- Horse racing gamblers (43%)
- Electronic gambling machine players (43%, albeit on a small sample n=78)
- Casino gamblers (36%)
- Sports/other events gamblers (35%)
- Speculative investment gamblers (35%)

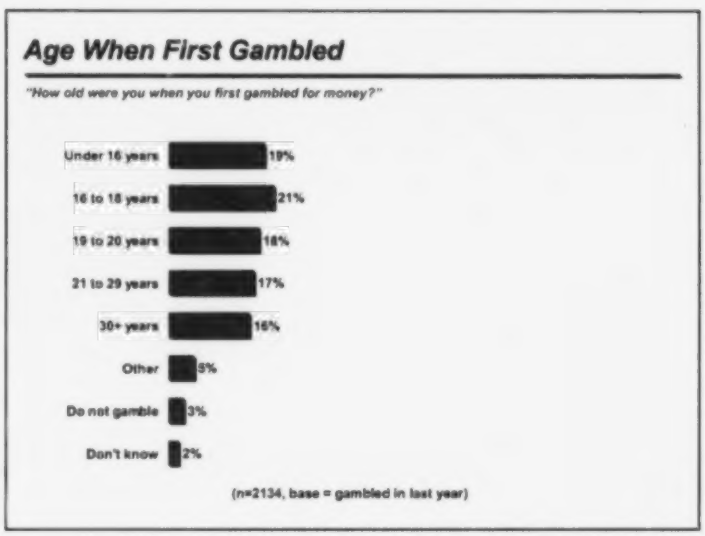


Age When First Gambled

There is a wide dispersion in the age at which past year gamblers first gambled for money. Four-in-ten (40%) say they started before the age of 19, including two-in-ten (19%) who started at 16 years or less. Eighteen percent first gambled at 19 or 20 years, while 17 percent started later in their 20's and 16 percent started in their 30's.

The data reveals a significant gender gap in the age first started gambling. Men are twice as likely as women to have started gambling before their 19th birthday (53% vs. 26%).

The data also reveals that past year participants in some gambling activities got an earlier start than others. This includes sports lottery gamblers (63% before age 19), sports/other events gamblers (62%), private game gamblers (60%), electronic machine gamblers (57%, albeit on a small sample n=78) and horse race gamblers (52%).



5.0 Problem Gambling in British Columbia

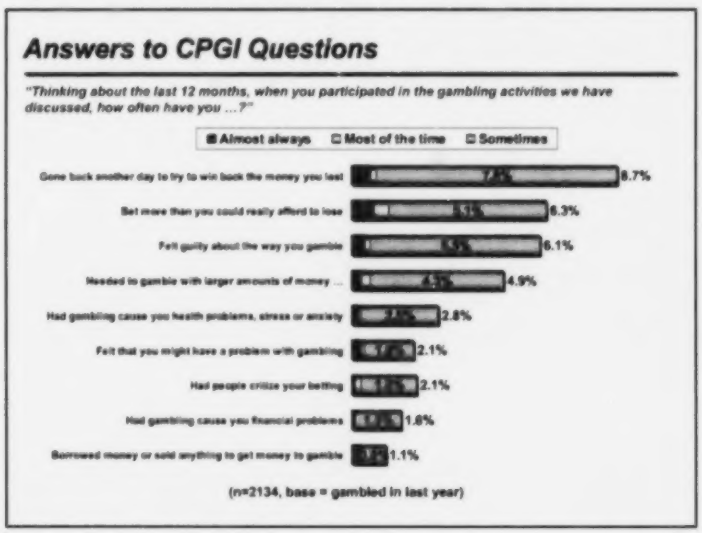
This section of the report explores the prevalence of problem gambling in British Columbia. It compares the current level of problem gambling in British Columbia to previous studies, as well as to other Canadian jurisdictions. It also provides a profile of problem gamblers and their gambling behaviours.

5.1. *Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI)*

The Questions

A total of nine question items are used to score the Canadian Problem Gambling index. These questions—asked only of past year gamblers—probe gamblers on how often they act or feel a certain way. "Almost always" responses score three points, "most of the time" scores two points, "sometimes" scores one point and "never" scores zero points.

As shown in the chart, very few residents endorse (almost always, most of the time, or sometimes) any of the items. The most frequently endorsed item—"gone back another day to win back the money you lost" —is endorsed by only nine percent of all British Columbians. The least endorsed item—"borrowed money or sold anything to get money to gamble"—is endorsed by one percent of BC residents.


Answers to CPGI Questions
"Thinking about the last 12 months, when you participated in the gambling activities we have discussed, how often have you ...?"
Almost always
Most of the time
Sometimes
Gone back another day to try to win back the money you lost
8.7%
Bet more than you could really afford to lose
6.3%
Felt guilty about the way you gamble
6.1%
Needed to gamble with larger amounts of money ...
4.9%
Had gambling cause you health problems, stress or anxiety
2.8%
Felt that you might have a problem with gambling
2.1%
Had people critize your betting
2.1%
Had gambling cause you financial problems
1.8%
Borrowed money or sold anything to get money to gamble
1.1%
(n=2134, base = gambled in last year)

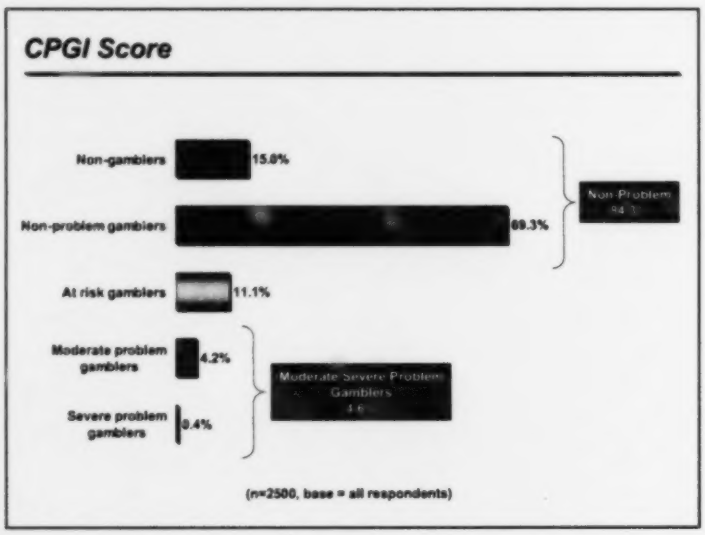
Prevalence of Problem Gambling in British Columbia

The CPGI classifies the vast majority of survey respondents (84.3%) into two non-problem categories. First, the 15.0 percent of survey respondents who have not gambled in the past year are classified as non-gamblers. Second, past year gamblers who score a "0" on the CPGI are classified as non-problem gamblers.

The CPGI classifies the remaining minority of survey respondents (15.7%) as either at-risk or problem gamblers. A total of 11.1 percent are classified as at-risk gamblers, based on their CPGI scores of "1" or "2". The remaining 4.6 percent of survey respondents are classified as problem gamblers.

Problem gamblers are then further subdivided into moderate problem gamblers (CPGI 3-7) and severe problem gamblers (CPGI 8+). The vast majority of problem gamblers in BC fall into the moderate category. Overall 4.2 percent of survey respondents are classified as moderate problem gamblers and 0.4 percent are classified as severe problem gamblers.

For a history of problem gambling measurement and a more detailed explanation of the CPGI classifications, please refer to "Section 2.0: Measuring Problem Gambling".



Projecting Problem Gambling Prevalence to the BC Population

Using the Canadian Problem Gambling Index, we estimate that 4.6 percent of the population are problem gamblers, including 4.2 percent who are moderate problem gamblers and 0.4 percent who are severe problem gamblers.

Based on a provincial adult population (18+) of 3,257,500 (BC Stats 2002) this translates into a best estimate of 150,250 problem gamblers, including 136,000 moderate problem gamblers and 14,250 severe problem gamblers.

- The 95 percent confidence range for problem gamblers is 123,400 to 177,100.
- The 95 percent confidence range for moderate problem gamblers is 110,400 to 161,600.
- The 95 percent confidence range for severe problem gamblers is 5,800 to 22,700.

These figures are not directly comparable to previous prevalence surveys in BC, because previous surveys measured problem gambling using the South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS), rather than CPGI.

5.0 Problem Gambling in British Columbia

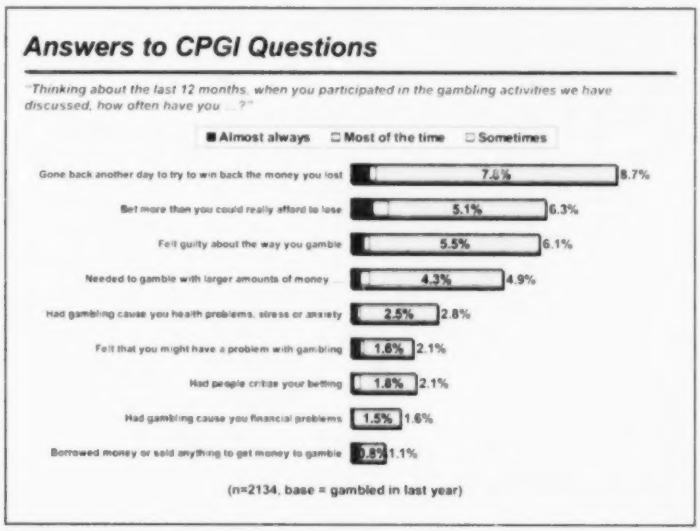
This section of the report explores the prevalence of problem gambling in British Columbia. It compares the current level of problem gambling in British Columbia to previous studies, as well as to other Canadian jurisdictions. It also provides a profile of problem gamblers and their gambling behaviours.

5.1. *Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI)*

The Questions

A total of nine question items are used to score the Canadian Problem Gambling index. These questions—asked only of past year gamblers—probe gamblers on how often they act or feel a certain way. "Almost always" responses score three points, "most of the time" scores two points, "sometimes" scores one point and "never" scores zero points.

As shown in the chart, very few residents endorse (almost always, most of the time, or sometimes) any of the items. The most frequently endorsed item—"gone back another day to win back the money you lost" —is endorsed by only nine percent of all British Columbians. The least endorsed item—"borrowed money or sold anything to get money to gamble"—is endorsed by one percent of BC residents.


Answers to CPGI Questions
"Thinking about the last 12 months, when you participated in the gambling activities we have discussed, how often have you ...?"
Almost always
Most of the time
Sometimes
Gone back another day to try to win back the money you lost
7.6%
8.7%
Bet more than you could really afford to lose
5.1%
6.3%
Felt guilty about the way you gamble
5.5%
6.1%
Needed to gamble with larger amounts of money ...
4.3%
4.9%
Had gambling cause you health problems, stress or anxiety
2.5%
2.8%
Felt that you might have a problem with gambling
1.6%
2.1%
Had people critise your betting
1.8%
2.1%
Had gambling cause you financial problems
1.5%
1.6%
Borrowed money or sold anything to get money to gamble
0.8%
1.1%
(n=2134, base = gambled in last year)

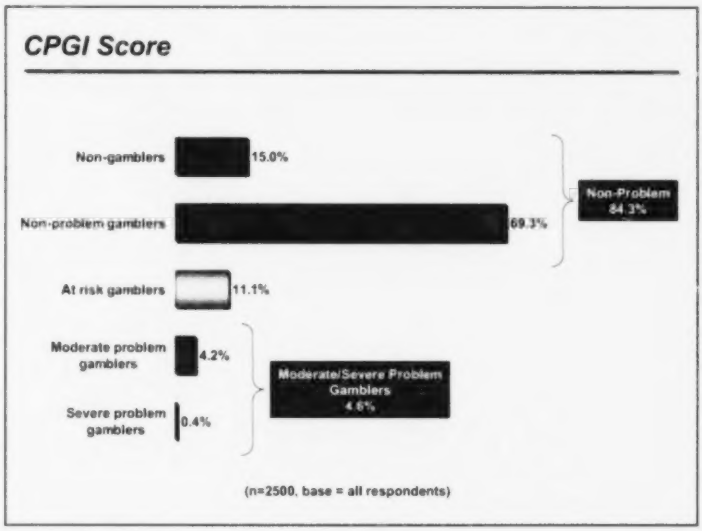
Prevalence of Problem Gambling in British Columbia

The CPGI classifies the vast majority of survey respondents (84.3%) into two non-problem categories. First, the 15.0 percent of survey respondents who have not gambled in the past year are classified as non-gamblers. Second, past year gamblers who score a "0" on the CPGI are classified as non-problem gamblers.

The CPGI classifies the remaining minority of survey respondents (15.7%) as either at-risk or problem gamblers. A total of 11.1 percent are classified as at-risk gamblers, based on their CPGI scores of "1" or "2". The remaining 4.6 percent of survey respondents are classified as problem gamblers.

Problem gamblers are then further subdivided into moderate problem gamblers (CPGI 3-7) and severe problem gamblers (CPGI 8+). The vast majority of problem gamblers in BC fall into the moderate category. Overall 4.2 percent of survey respondents are classified as moderate problem gamblers and 0.4 percent are classified as severe problem gamblers.

For a history of problem gambling measurement and a more detailed explanation of the CPGI classifications, please refer to "Section 2.0: Measuring Problem Gambling".



Projecting Problem Gambling Prevalence to the BC Population

Using the Canadian Problem Gambling Index, we estimate that 4.6 percent of the population are problem gamblers, including 4.2 percent who are moderate problem gamblers and 0.4 percent who are severe problem gamblers.

Based on a provincial adult population (18+) of 3,257,500 (BC Stats 2002) this translates into a best estimate of 150,250 problem gamblers, including 136,000 moderate problem gamblers and 14,250 severe problem gamblers.

- The 95 percent confidence range for problem gamblers is 123,400 to 177,100.
- The 95 percent confidence range for moderate problem gamblers is 110,400 to 161,600.
- The 95 percent confidence range for severe problem gamblers is 5,800 to 22,700.

These figures are not directly comparable to previous prevalence surveys in BC, because previous surveys measured problem gambling using the South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS), rather than CPGI.

Comparison to Other Jurisdictions

The estimate of total problem gamblers in British Columbia (4.6%) is in the middle of the pack of Canadian jurisdictions that have completed surveys using the CPGI methodology. Our estimate for British Columbia is lower than in Saskatchewan (5.9%) and Alberta (5.2%), but higher than estimates from New Brunswick (3.2%), Manitoba (3.4%) and Ontario (3.8%). Of these provinces, only Manitoba's estimate is statistically different ($p<.05$) from British Columbia. The estimate for British Columbia is also statistically higher than the nation-wide estimate from the CPGI validation study (3.3%, $p<.05$).

While British Columbia is in the middle of the provinces with respect to total problem gambling, our estimate of the incidence of severe problem gamblers (0.4%) is the lowest of any comparable province. And, BC's estimate of severe problem gamblers is statistically lower than estimates from New Brunswick (1.4%, $p<.05$), Alberta (1.3%, $p<.01$), Saskatchewan (1.2%, $p<.01$), Manitoba (1.1%, $p<.01$) and the national validation study (0.9%, $p<.05$).

Currently, about one-in-ten (11.1%) British Columbians do not have gambling problems, but are classified as at-risk of developing gambling problems. The at-risk rate in BC is the highest of any comparable province and statistically higher than rates in New Brunswick (4.9%, $p<.001$), Manitoba (6.0%, $p<.001$), Ontario (9.6%, $p<.05$) and the national validation study (6.8%, $p<.001$).

CPGI Comparisons

	BC Dec 02 (n=2500)	AB Feb 02 (n=1804)	SK Jan 02 (n=1845)	MB Apr 01 (n=3119)	ON Dec 01 (n=5000)	NB Aug 01 (n=900)	Canada* Spring 00 (n=3120)
Non-gamblers (past year)	15.0%	18.0%	13.4%	15.0%	16.8%	19.8%	
Non-problem gamblers	69.3%	67.0%	71.4%	75.6%	69.8%	72.1%	
Total Non-Problem	*84.3%*	*85.0%*	*84.8%*	*90.6%*	*86.6%*	*91.9%*	*89.9%*
At risk gamblers	11.1%	9.8%	9.3%	6.0%	9.6%	4.9%	6.8%
Moderate problem gamblers	4.2%	3.9%	4.7%	2.3%	3.1%	1.8%	2.4%
Severe problem gamblers	0.4%	1.3%	1.2%	1.1%	0.7%	1.4%	0.9%
Total Problem Gamblers	*4.6%*	*5.2%*	*5.9%*	*3.4%*	*3.8%*	*3.2%*	*3.3%*

** CPGI National Validation Study.*

5.2. South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS)

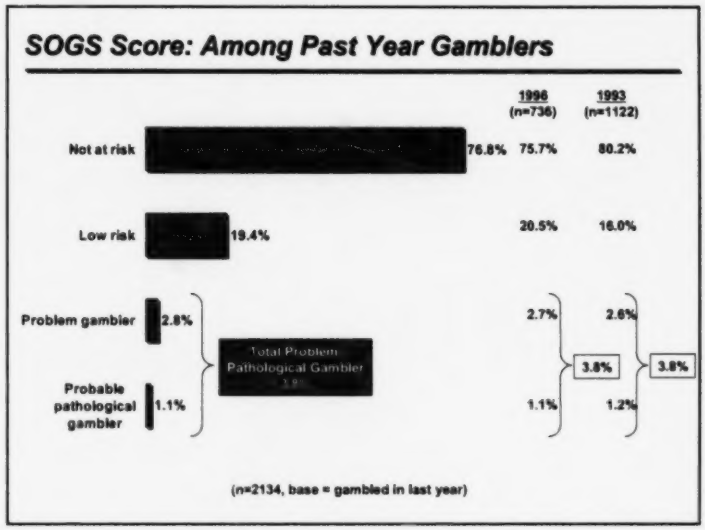
The 1996 and 1993 prevalence studies in British Columbia employed the South Oaks Gambling Screen to estimate rates of problem gambling. In order to provide historical comparability, the SOGS questions were asked again in the 2002 survey. British Columbia and Manitoba are the only provinces to employ both the CPGI and SOGS methodologies in the same survey.

A major methodological difference between the CPGI and the SOGS is that the CPGI questions are asked only of past year gamblers, while the SOGS questions are usually asked of lifetime gamblers. In order to minimize respondent fatigue and to create consistency with the CPGI methodology, a decision was made to ask the SOGS questions only of past year gamblers. While this is a perfectly sound methodology, it adds a complication in comparing the SOGS scores from 2002 (based on past year gamblers) with previous surveys (based on lifetime gamblers). In order to make this comparison, we have gone back to the data from the 1996 and 1993 surveys and re-run the SOGS based only on past year gamblers. For this reason, some of the SOGS data presented in this report will differ slightly from the original 1996 and 1993 reports.

Among Past Year Gamblers

The 2002 survey classifies 3.8 percent of past year gamblers as either a problem gambler (2.8%) or a probable pathological gambler (1.1%). This estimate of total problem and probable pathological gamblers is identical to estimates from 1996 and 1993. In addition, there is no statistical change in the level of problem gamblers (2.8% 2002, 2.7% 1996, 2.6% 1993) or probable pathological gamblers (1.1%, 2002, 1.1% 1996, 1.2% 1993).

In summary, the current level of problem gambling among past year gamblers in British Columbia is unchanged from both 1996 and 1993.



Among All British Columbians

As mentioned, the 2002 survey asked the SOGS items of past year gamblers, while the 1996 and 1993 surveys asked the SOGS items of lifetime gamblers. This makes it difficult, but not impossible, to compare the incidence of problem gambling across the entire adult population.

One way to make this comparison is to assume that all non-past year gamblers would have scored a "0" on the SOGS, placing them in the not at risk category. It is important to note that this is a very questionable assumption and not part of the standard SOGS methodology. In fact, the 1996 and 1993 BC prevalence surveys showed that a very small portion of lifetime gamblers who have not gambled in the last year were classified in the low risk or problem gambling categories.

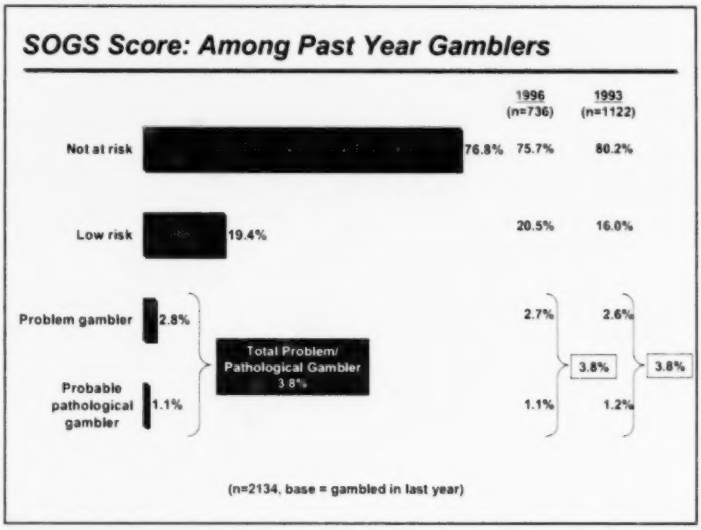
Nevertheless, the impact of this assumption on overall population prevalence rates is very small. In addition, this exact assumption is made in the methodology for the Canadian Problem Gambling Index.

The 2002 survey classifies 3.8 percent of past year gamblers as problem or probable pathological gamblers. Given that the prevalence of past year gamblers in British Columbia is 85 percent, we estimate that 3.2 percent (3.8% x 85%) of adult British Columbians are problem gamblers or probable pathological gamblers. This estimate is statistically unchanged from 1996 (3.9%) and 1993 (3.5%), indicating that there has been no change in the level of problem gambling across the entire adult BC population.

Among Past Year Gamblers

The 2002 survey classifies 3.8 percent of past year gamblers as either a problem gambler (2.8%) or a probable pathological gambler (1.1%). This estimate of total problem and probable pathological gamblers is identical to estimates from 1996 and 1993. In addition, there is no statistical change in the level of problem gamblers (2.8% 2002, 2.7% 1996, 2.6% 1993) or probable pathological gamblers (1.1%, 2002, 1.1% 1996, 1.2% 1993).

In summary, the current level of problem gambling among past year gamblers in British Columbia is unchanged from both 1996 and 1993.



Among All British Columbians

As mentioned, the 2002 survey asked the SOGS items of past year gamblers, while the 1996 and 1993 surveys asked the SOGS items of lifetime gamblers. This makes it difficult, but not impossible, to compare the incidence of problem gambling across the entire adult population.

One way to make this comparison is to assume that all non-past year gamblers would have scored a "0" on the SOGS, placing them in the not at risk category. It is important to note that this is a very questionable assumption and not part of the standard SOGS methodology. In fact, the 1996 and 1993 BC prevalence surveys showed that a very small portion of lifetime gamblers who have not gambled in the last year were classified in the low risk or problem gambling categories.

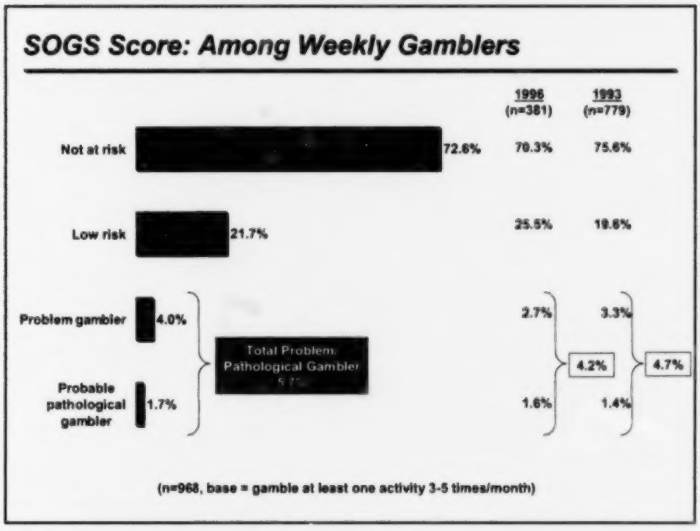
Nevertheless, the impact of this assumption on overall population prevalence rates is very small. In addition, this exact assumption is made in the methodology for the Canadian Problem Gambling Index.

The 2002 survey classifies 3.8 percent of past year gamblers as problem or probable pathological gamblers. Given that the prevalence of past year gamblers in British Columbia is 85 percent, we estimate that 3.2 percent (3.8% x 85%) of adult British Columbians are problem gamblers or probable pathological gamblers. This estimate is statistically unchanged from 1996 (3.9%) and 1993 (3.5%), indicating that there has been no change in the level of problem gambling across the entire adult BC population.

Among Weekly Gamblers

We also went back to the 1996 and 1993 data and re-ran the SOGS based only on past week gamblers. The current survey classifies 5.7 percent of weekly gamblers as either a problem gambler (4.0%) or a probable pathological gambler (1.7%). While this estimate is slightly higher than in 1996 (4.2%) or 1993 (4.7), neither of these differences is statistically significant.

And similar to past year gamblers, there is no statistical change among weekly gamblers in the level of problem gamblers (4.0% 2002, 2.7% 1996, 3.3% 1993) or probable pathological gamblers (1.7%, 2002, 1.6% 1996, 1.4% 1993).



5.3. Problem Gambling Profiles

This section of the report examines CPGI classifications broken out by key demographic and socio-economic variables, as well as past year gambling activities. Two basic statistical tests have been used to examine relationships:

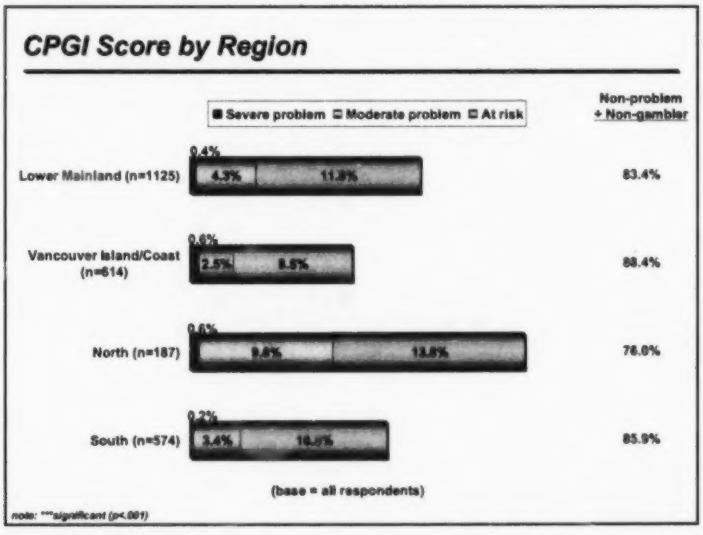
- For each variable or activity (e.g. gender, marital status, region), the strength of the overall relationship with the CPGI is measured through a chi-square test.
- For individual components of variables (e.g. 18-24 years, married, Island/Coast), differences are tested using t-tests.

The main finding in this section is that problem gambling rates are higher in certain segments of the BC population. Specifically, the prevalence of problem gamblers is higher than average among Northern residents (10.2%), young residents (9.8%, 18-24 years) and lower household income residents (6.8%, <$30K). In addition, past year participation in many gambling activities is associated with higher problem gambling rates. The top three activities in terms of problem gamblers are sports lotteries (12.9%), bingo (10.9%) and horse racing (10.4%).

By Region

There is a substantial regional difference in CPGI classifications across British Columbia. The North has by far the highest prevalence of problem gamblers at 10.2 percent. This is more than twice the level of problem gamblers observed in all other regions of the province. Meanwhile, the level of problem gamblers in the Island/Coast (3.1%) is statistically lower than for the province as a whole.

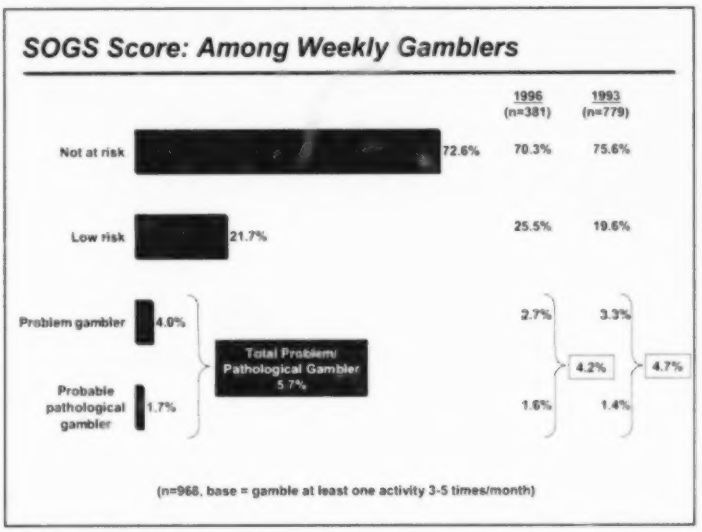
The North stands out for more than just problem gamblers. An additional 13.8 percent of the North is classified as at-risk gamblers. Although this is only statistically higher than the Island/Coast (8.5%), it is directionally higher than all other regions. As with problem gamblers, the incidence of at-risk gamblers is lower in the Island/Coast (8.5%) than in the province as a whole.



Among Weekly Gamblers

We also went back to the 1996 and 1993 data and re-ran the SOGS based only on past week gamblers. The current survey classifies 5.7 percent of weekly gamblers as either a problem gambler (4.0%) or a probable pathological gambler (1.7%). While this estimate is slightly higher than in 1996 (4.2%) or 1993 (4.7), neither of these differences is statistically significant.

And similar to past year gamblers, there is no statistical change among weekly gamblers in the level of problem gamblers (4.0% 2002, 2.7% 1996, 3.3% 1993) or probable pathological gamblers (1.7%, 2002, 1.6% 1996, 1.4% 1993).



5.3. *Problem Gambling Profiles*

This section of the report examines CPGI classifications broken out by key demographic and socio-economic variables, as well as past year gambling activities. Two basic statistical tests have been used to examine relationships:

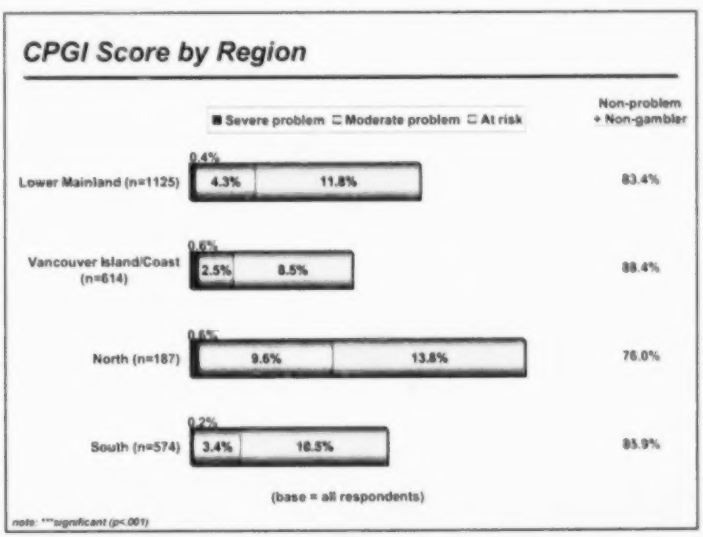
- For each variable or activity (e.g. gender, marital status, region), the strength of the overall relationship with the CPGI is measured through a chi-square test.
- For individual components of variables (e.g. 18-24 years, married, Island/Coast), differences are tested using t-tests.

The main finding in this section is that problem gambling rates are higher in certain segments of the BC population. Specifically, the prevalence of problem gamblers is higher than average among Northern residents (10.2%), young residents (9.8%, 18-24 years) and lower household income residents (6.8%, <$30K). In addition, past year participation in many gambling activities is associated with higher problem gambling rates. The top three activities in terms of problem gamblers are sports lotteries (12.9%), bingo (10.9%) and horse racing (10.4%).

By Region

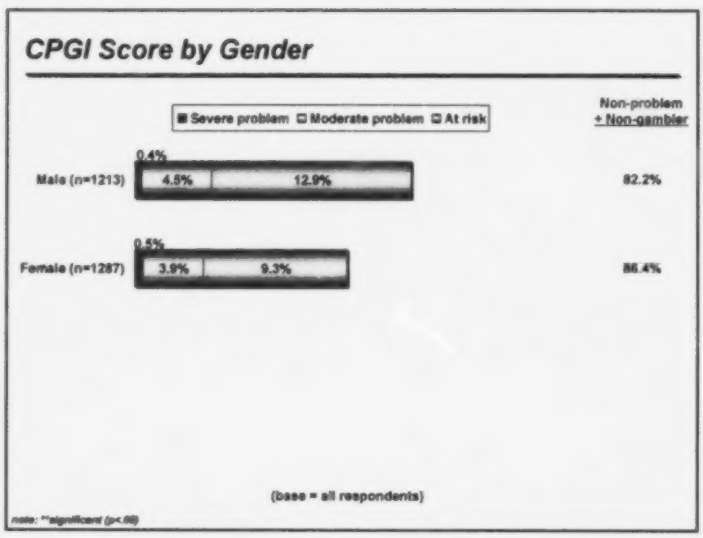
There is a substantial regional difference in CPGI classifications across British Columbia. The North has by far the highest prevalence of problem gamblers at 10.2 percent. This is more than twice the level of problem gamblers observed in all other regions of the province. Meanwhile, the level of problem gamblers in the Island/Coast (3.1%) is statistically lower than for the province as a whole.

The North stands out for more than just problem gamblers. An additional 13.8 percent of the North is classified as at-risk gamblers. Although this is only statistically higher than the Island/Coast (8.5%), it is directionally higher than all other regions. As with problem gamblers, the incidence of at-risk gamblers is lower in the Island/Coast (8.5%) than in the province as a whole.



By Gender

A statistical relationship exists between CPGI classifications and gender. This difference is limited, however, to at-risk gamblers (12.9%, men vs. 9.3%, women). There is no statistical difference in the level of problems gamblers between men (4.9%) and women (4.3%).

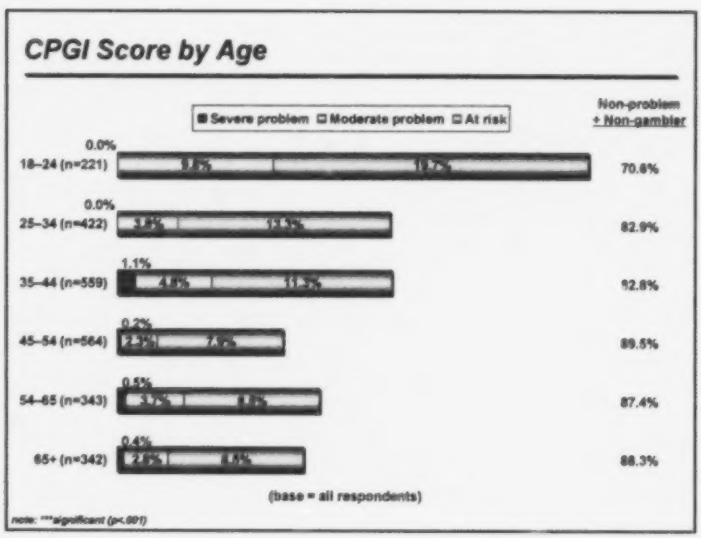


By Age

There are substantial differences in CPGI classifications by age. The level of problem gamblers is statistically higher than average with the 18 to 24 group (9.8%) and statistically lower than average with the 45 to 54 group (2.5%).

The same pattern holds for at-risk gamblers. The level of at-risk gamblers is statistically higher than average with the 18 to 24 group (19.7%) and statistically lower than average with the 45 to 54 group (7.9%).

Looking only at severe problem gamblers, the incidence is statistically higher than average among the 35 to 44 group (1.1%). Interestingly, none of the 18 to 24 group falls into the severe problem gambler category.

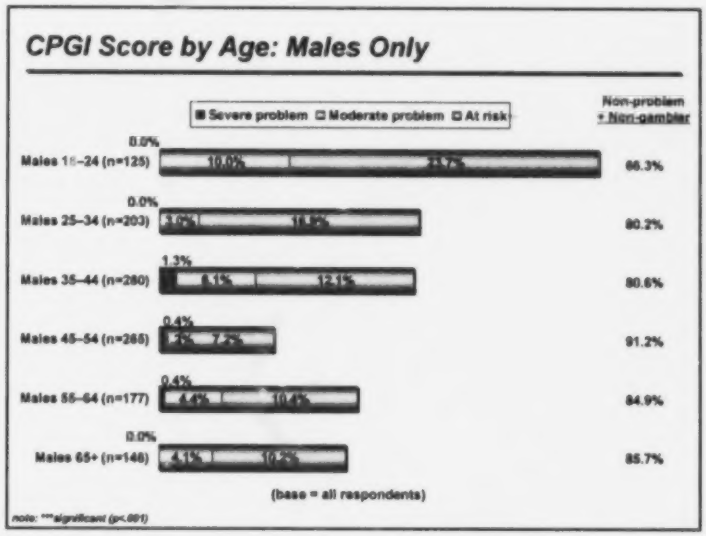


By Age and Gender

Men

Looking exclusively at men, the pattern by age mimics that of the entire population. The level of problem gamblers is statistically higher with the 18 to 24 group (10.0%) than it is with all men. In contrast, the level of problem gamblers among the 45 to 54 group (1.5%) is statistically lower than the average for all men.

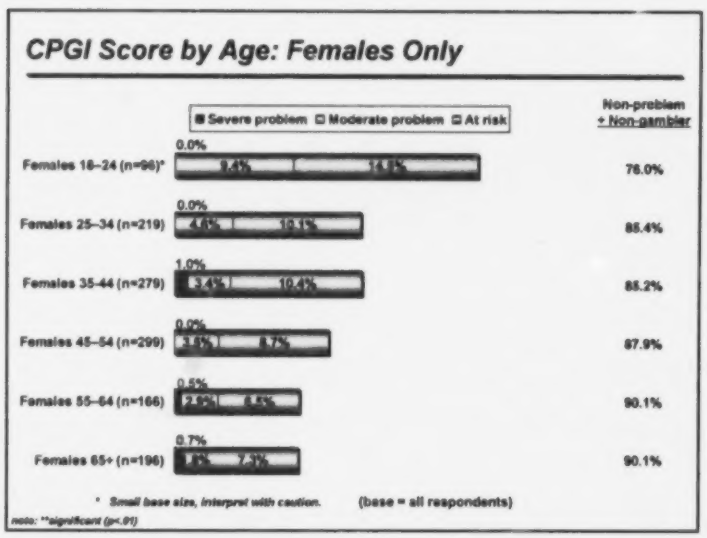
The same pattern holds once again for at-risk gamblers. The level of at-risk gamblers is statistically higher than average for men within the 18 to 24 group (23.7%) and statistically lower than average for men within the 45 to 54 group (7.2%).



Women

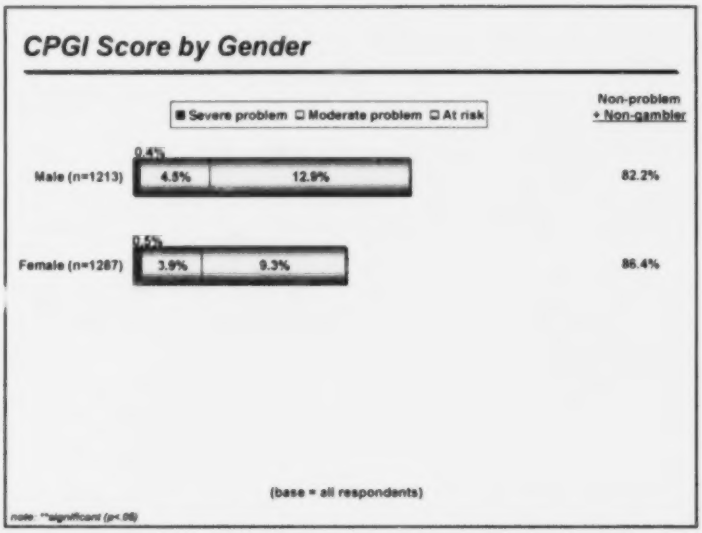
While there are differences in CPGI classifications across the different female age groups, the strength of the relationship is somewhat weaker than for males. As with men, the highest prevalence of problem gamblers is in the 18 to 24 group (9.4%). While this figure is statistically higher than problem gambler rates among the 45 to 54 group (3.5%) and the 65+ group (2.5%), it is not higher than the overall average for all women.

Similarly, none of the female age groups stand out from the overall average for women in terms of the incidence of at-risk gamblers.



By Gender

A statistical relationship exists between CPGI classifications and gender. This difference is limited, however, to at-risk gamblers (12.9%, men vs. 9.3%, women). There is no statistical difference in the level of problems gamblers between men (4.9%) and women (4.3%).

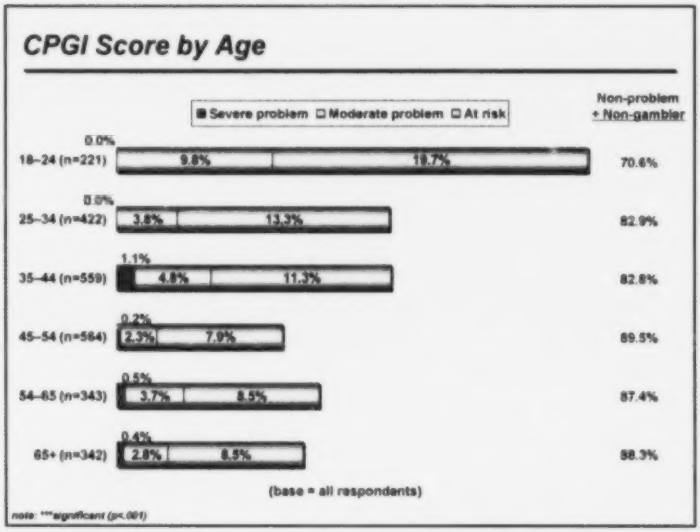


By Age

There are substantial differences in CPGI classifications by age. The level of problem gamblers is statistically higher than average with the 18 to 24 group (9.8%) and statistically lower than average with the 45 to 54 group (2.5%).

The same pattern holds for at-risk gamblers. The level of at-risk gamblers is statistically higher than average with the 18 to 24 group (19.7%) and statistically lower than average with the 45 to 54 group (7.9%).

Looking only at severe problem gamblers, the incidence is statistically higher than average among the 35 to 44 group (1.1%). Interestingly, none of the 18 to 24 group falls into the severe problem gambler category.

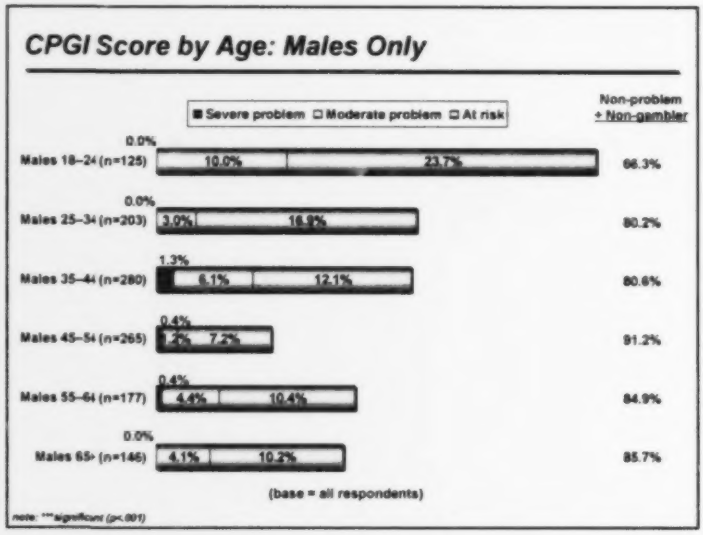


By Age and Gender

Men

Looking exclusively at men, the pattern by age mimics that of the entire population. The level of problem gamblers is statistically higher with the 18 to 24 group (10.0%) than it is with all men. In contrast, the level of problem gamblers among the 45 to 54 group (1.5%) is statistically lower than the average for all men.

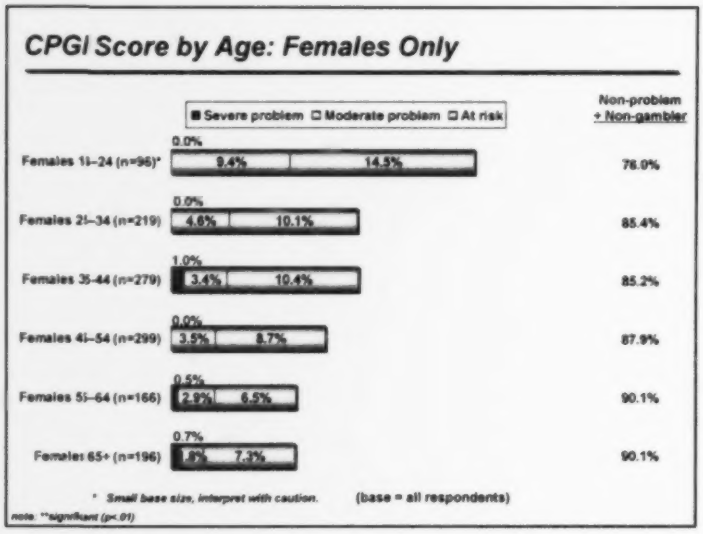
The same pattern holds once again for at-risk gamblers. The level of at-risk gamblers is statistically higher than average for men within the 18 to 24 group (23.7%) and statistically lower than average for men within the 45 to 54 group (7.2%).



Women

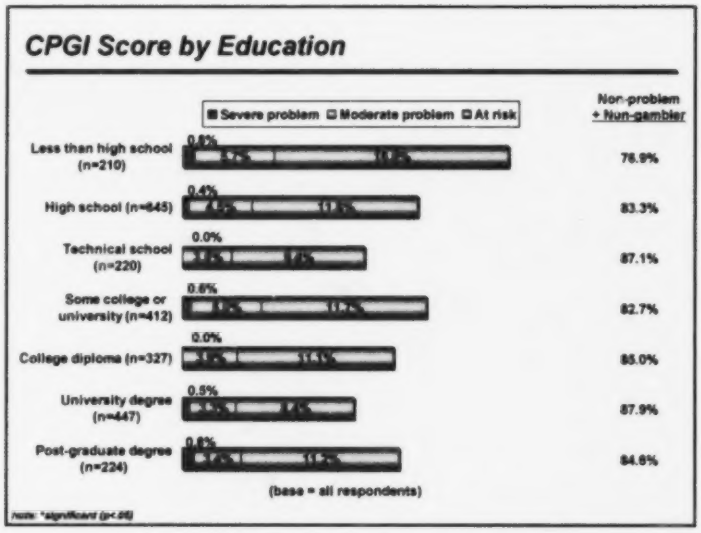
While there are differences in CPGI classifications across the different female age groups, the strength of the relationship is somewhat weaker than for males. As with men, the highest prevalence of problem gamblers is in the 18 to 24 group (9.4%). While this figure is statistically higher than problem gambler rates among the 45 to 54 group (3.5%) and the 65+ group (2.5%), it is not higher than the overall average for all women.

Similarly, none of the female age groups stand out from the overall average for women in terms of the incidence of at-risk gamblers.



By Education

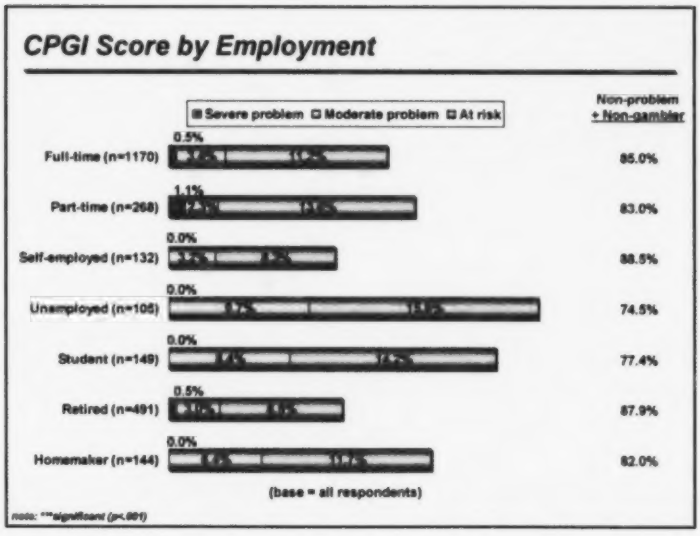
While there is a statistically significant relationship between education and CPGI classifications, none of these differences are reflected in the problem gambling or at-risk gambling classifications. The highest rate of problem gamblers is among those with less than a high school education (6.5%). This is not statistically different, however, than the overall problem gambler rate or the rate among any individual education categories.



By Employment

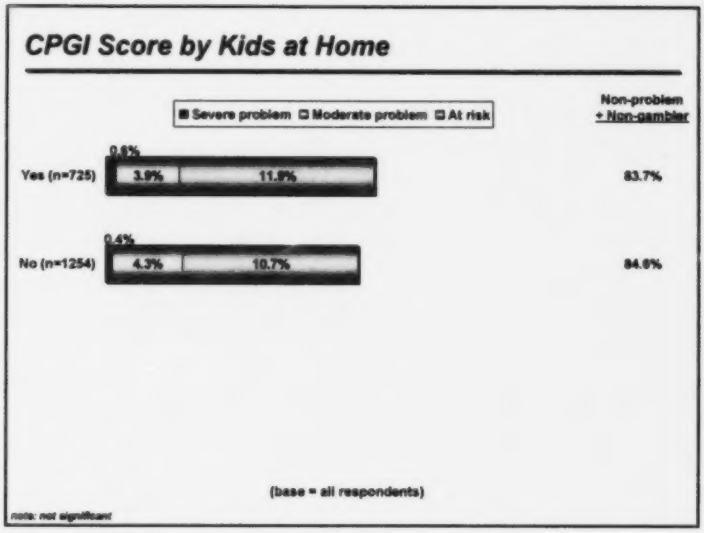
There is a statistically significant relationship between employment and CPGI classifications. The highest prevalence of problem gamblers is among the unemployed (9.7%) and students (8.4%). While neither of these rates is statistically higher than the overall average, they are statistically higher than the problem gambler rates among the full time employed (3.9%), part time employed (3.4%) and retired (3.6%).

The level of at-risk gamblers is statistically lower than average for retired residents (8.5%).



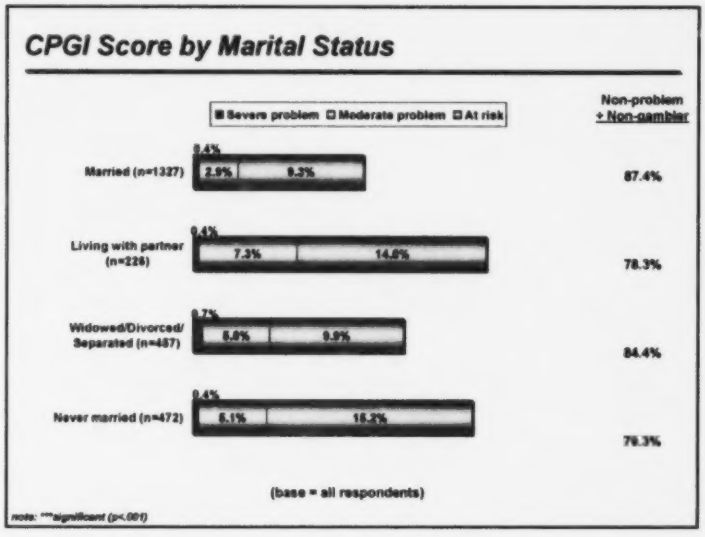
By Kids at Home

There is no statistical relationship between having children under 18 in the home and CPGI classifications. The level of problem gamblers is similar between BC residents with children at home (4.4%) and without children at home (4.7%).



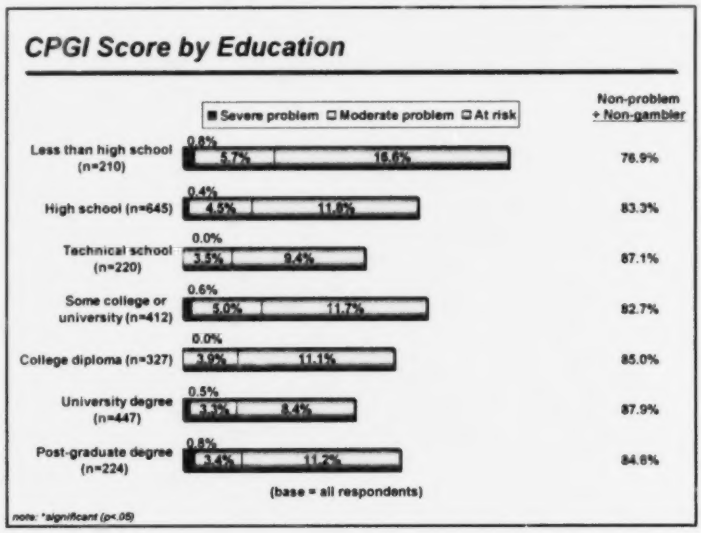
By Marital Status

There is a statistically significant relationship between marital status and CPGI classifications. Specifically, the level of problem gamblers is lower than average among married residents (3.3%). The level of at-risk gamblers is also lower than average among married residents (9.3%). BC residents who have never been married have a statistically higher than average incidence of at-risk gambling (15.2%).



By Education

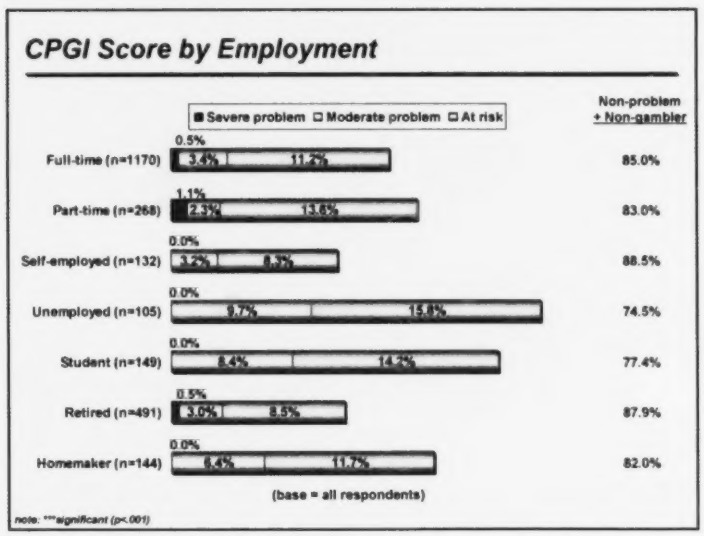
While there is a statistically significant relationship between education and CPGI classifications, none of these differences are reflected in the problem gambling or at-risk gambling classifications. The highest rate of problem gamblers is among those with less than a high school education (6.5%). This is not statistically different, however, than the overall problem gambler rate or the rate among any individual education categories.



By Employment

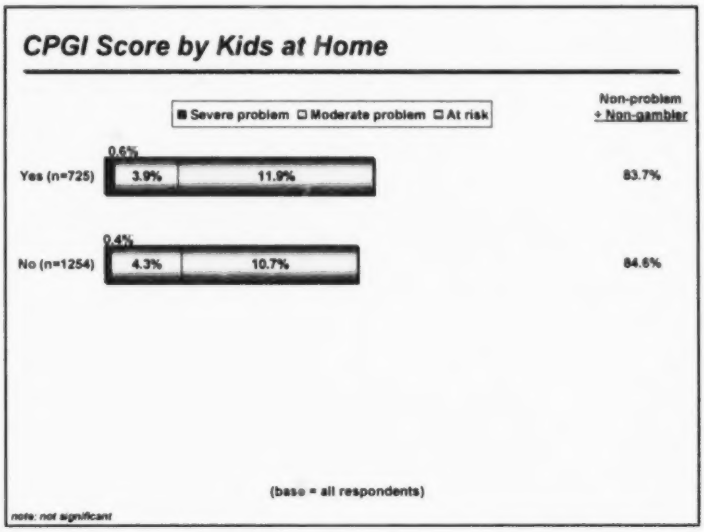
There is a statistically significant relationship between employment and CPGI classifications. The highest prevalence of problem gamblers is among the unemployed (9.7%) and students (8.4%). While neither of these rates is statistically higher than the overall average, they are statistically higher than the problem gambler rates among the full time employed (3.9%), part time employed (3.4%) and retired (3.6%).

The level of at-risk gamblers is statistically lower than average for retired residents (8.5%).



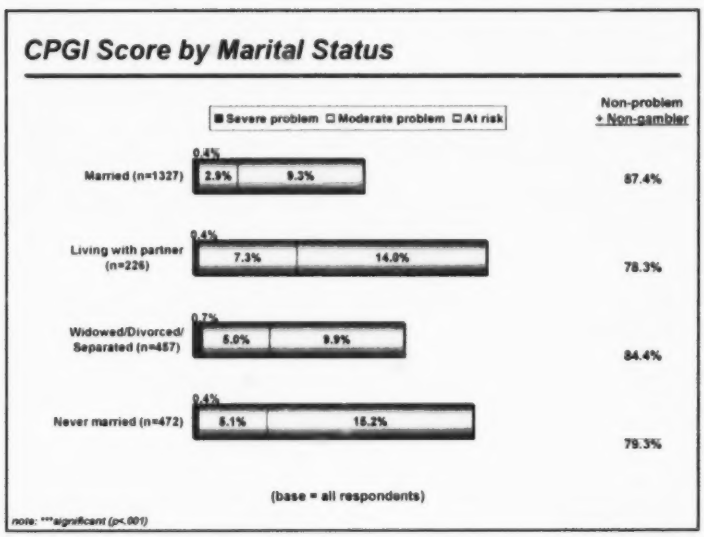
By Kids at Home

There is no statistical relationship between having children under 18 in the home and CPGI classifications. The level of problem gamblers is similar between BC residents with children at home (4.4%) and without children at home (4.7%).



By Marital Status

There is a statistically significant relationship between marital status and CPGI classifications. Specifically, the level of problem gamblers is lower than average among married residents (3.3%). The level of at-risk gamblers is also lower than average among married residents (9.3%). BC residents who have never been married have a statistically higher than average incidence of at-risk gambling (15.2%).

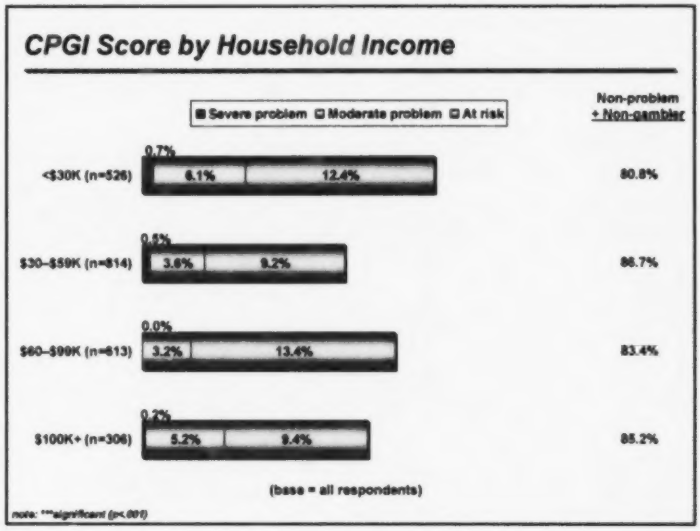


By Household Income

There is a statistically significant relationship between household income and CPGI classifications. British Columbians with the lowest household incomes (<$30K) have a higher than average incidence of problem gamblers (6.8%) than the population as a whole.

While the second highest income group ($60-$99K) has a statistically lower than average rate of problem gamblers (3.2%), it also has a statistically higher rate of at-risk gamblers (13.4%).

The level of at-risk gamblers is lower than average with the second lowest income group (9.2%, $30-$59K).



By Past Year Gambling Activity

The accompanying chart shows CPGI classifications as broken out by past year participants in each of 12 different gambling activities. Given that these are all past year gamblers, it is hardly surprising that there is a strong statistical relationship between participation in each activity and CPGI classifications. For most activities, this relationship extends to the problem gambler categories. Several activities have higher problem gambler rates (severe+moderate) than are found in the population as a whole. In descending order, these activities include:

- Sports lottery gamblers (12.9% problem gamblers)
- Bingo gamblers (10.9%)
- Horse racing gamblers (10.4%)
- Casino gamblers (8.8%)
- Sports and other event gamblers (8.2%)
- Private game gamblers (8.0%)
- Lottery gamblers (5.8%)

The prevalence of problem gamblers is also higher among past year Internet gamblers (9.9%) and electronic gaming machine gamblers (8.4%). These two differences are not statistically different than the overall average, likely due to the small sample sizes of these gamblers in our study.

The level of at-risk gamblers is also statistically higher than the overall average for every past year gambling activity category.

Looking more closely at past year casino gamblers, the prevalence of problem gambling does not differ by games usually played. There is no statistical difference between all casino gamblers (8.8% problem gamblers) and casino gamblers who usually play table games (12.3%, n=68), card games (10.8%, n=240) or slot machines (7.7%, n=557).

5.4. *Gambling Behaviours by CPGI Classification*

This section of the report looks at the relationship between CPGI classifications and certain gambling behaviours and attitudes. The strength of each relationship is measured through a chi-square test.

Past Year Gambling Activity

The table at right is the flip side of the earlier chart that showed CPGI classifications by past year gambling activity. This table shows past year gambling activity by CPGI classifications. The non-gambler classification of the CPGI is not shown as the percentages would all be zero. As such, the total column represents "total gamblers" and not the "total population".

There is a statistical relationship between "gambling" CPGI classifications and eight of the 11 past year gambling activities. The three exceptions are lottery games, charity raffles and speculative investments. For these three activities, no differences in participation are noted across the different CPGI classifications.

Past Year Gambling Activities by CPGI Classification

"Have you ever spent money on ... ? About how often did you play ... in the past 12 months?"

	Total Gamblers (n=2134) %	Non-Problem Gamblers (n=368) %	At Risk Gamblers (n=266) %	Moderate Problem Gamblers (n=100) %	Severe Problem Gamblers (n=11*) %
Other lottery games like 6/49, Daily 3	87	86	87	92	100
A charity raffle such as a hospital lottery	58	58	58	52	61
Gambling at a casino***	32	29	43	50	76
A private game***	24	21	37	38	21
Sports or other events**	21	19	27	31	30
Speculative investments	16	15	18	14	19
Bingo***	9	8	13	20	6
Betting on a horse race***	9	8	13	16	29
A sports lottery game***	6	4	11	13	23
An electronic gaming machine outside of a casino***	4	3	8	4	21
Gambling on the Internet**	2	1	4	4	0

* *Small base size, interpret with caution.*

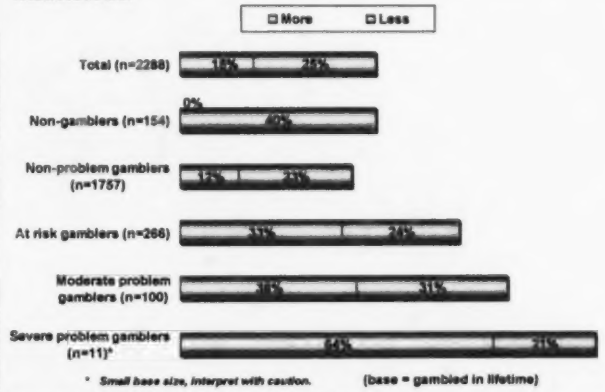
*note: **significant (p<.01), ***significant (p<.001)*

Gambling Versus Five Years Ago

CPGI classifications are strongly linked with changes in gambling behaviour over the past five years. Problem gamblers (39%, severe+moderate) and at-risk gamblers (33%) are much more likely than non-problem gamblers (12%) to say they are gambling more than five years ago.

Gambling Versus Five Years Ago

"Compared to five years ago, would you say that today you gamble more, less or about the same amount as before?"



* *Small base size, interpret with caution.* (base = gambled in lifetime)

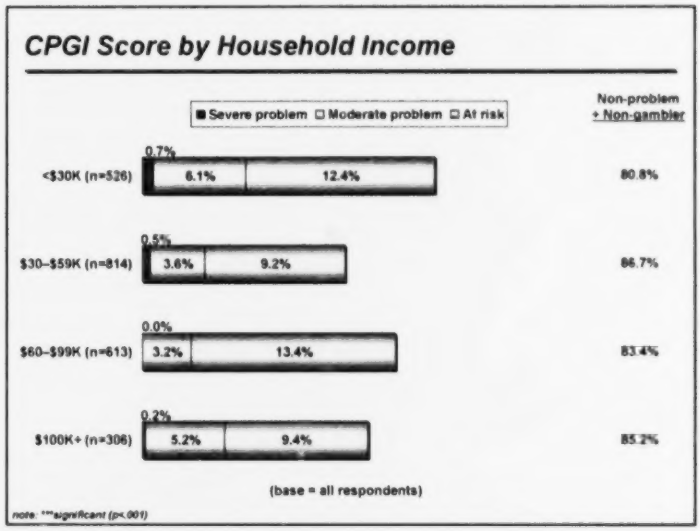
*all categories: ***significant (p<.001), gamblers only: ***significant (p<.001)*

By Household Income

There is a statistically significant relationship between household income and CPGI classifications. British Columbians with the lowest household incomes (<$30K) have a higher than average incidence of problem gamblers (6.8%) than the population as a whole.

While the second highest income group ($60-$99K) has a statistically lower than average rate of problem gamblers (3.2%), it also has a statistically higher rate of at-risk gamblers (13.4%).

The level of at-risk gamblers is lower than average with the second lowest income group (9.2%, $30-$59K).



By Past Year Gambling Activity

The accompanying chart shows CPGI classifications as broken out by past year participants in each of 12 different gambling activities. Given that these are all past year gamblers, it is hardly surprising that there is a strong statistical relationship between participation in each activity and CPGI classifications. For most activities, this relationship extends to the problem gambler categories. Several activities have higher problem gambler rates (severe+moderate) than are found in the population as a whole. In descending order, these activities include:

- Sports lottery gamblers (12.9% problem gamblers)
- Bingo gamblers (10.9%)
- Horse racing gamblers (10.4%)
- Casino gamblers (8.8%)
- Sports and other event gamblers (8.2%)
- Private game gamblers (8.0%)
- Lottery gamblers (5.8%)

The prevalence of problem gamblers is also higher among past year Internet gamblers (9.9%) and electronic gaming machine gamblers (8.4%). These two differences are not statistically different than the overall average, likely due to the small sample sizes of these gamblers in our study.

The level of at-risk gamblers is also statistically higher than the overall average for every past year gambling activity category.

Looking more closely at past year casino gamblers, the prevalence of problem gambling does not differ by games usually played. There is no statistical difference between all casino gamblers (8.8% problem gamblers) and casino gamblers who usually play table games (12.3%, n=68), card games (10.8%, n=240) or slot machines (7.7%, n=557).

5.4. *Gambling Behaviours by CPGI Classification*

This section of the report looks at the relationship between CPGI classifications and certain gambling behaviours and attitudes. The strength of each relationship is measured through a chi-square test.

Past Year Gambling Activity

The table at right is the flip side of the earlier chart that showed CPGI classifications by past year gambling activity. This table shows past year gambling activity by CPGI classifications. The non-gambler classification of the CPGI is not shown as the percentages would all be zero. As such, the total column represents "total gamblers" and not the "total population".

There is a statistical relationship between "gambling" CPGI classifications and eight of the 11 past year gambling activities. The three exceptions are lottery games, charity raffles and speculative investments. For these three activities, no differences in participation are noted across the different CPGI classifications.

Past Year Gambling Activities by CPGI Classification

"Have you ever spent money on ... ? About how often did you play ... in the past 12 months?"

	Total Gamblers (n=2134) %	Non-Problem Gamblers (n=368) %	At Risk Gamblers (n=266) %	Moderate Problem Gamblers (n=100) %	Severe Problem Gamblers (n=11*) %
Other lottery games like 6/49, Daily 3	87	86	87	92	100
A charity raffle such as a hospital lottery	58	58	58	52	61
Gambling at a casino***	32	29	43	50	76
A private game***	24	21	37	36	21
Sports or other events**	21	19	27	31	30
Speculative investments	16	15	18	14	19
Bingo***	9	8	13	20	6
Betting on a horse race***	9	8	13	16	29
A sports lottery game***	6	4	11	13	23
An electronic gaming machine outside of a casino***	4	3	8	4	21
Gambling on the Internet**	2	1	4	4	0

* *Small base size, interpret with caution.*

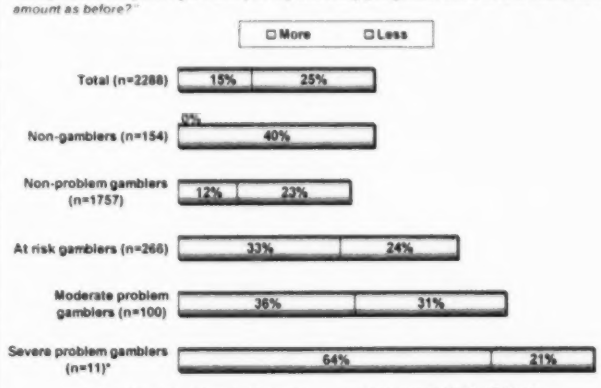
*note: **significant (p<.01), ***significant (p<.001)*

Gambling Versus Five Years Ago

CPGI classifications are strongly linked with changes in gambling behaviour over the past five years. Problem gamblers (39%, severe+moderate) and at-risk gamblers (33%) are much more likely than non-problem gamblers (12%) to say they are gambling more than five years ago.

Gambling Versus Five Years Ago

"Compared to five years ago, would you say that today you gamble more, less or about the same amount as before?"

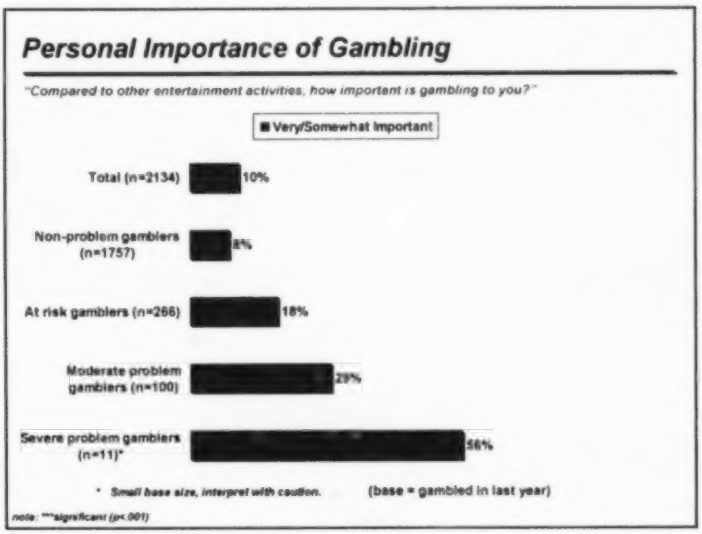


* *Small base size, interpret with caution.* (base = gambled in lifetime)

*all categories: ***significant (p<.001), gamblers only: ***significant (p<.001)*

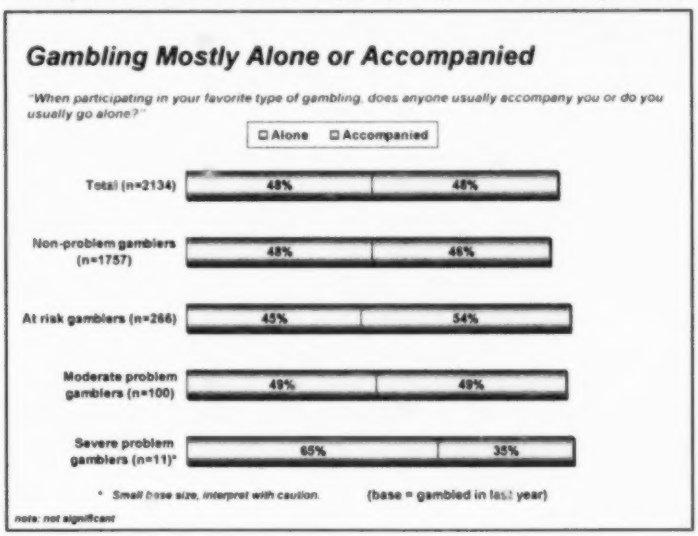
Personal Importance of Gambling

Gambling becomes more important relative to other entertainment activities as gamblers move up the CPGI. Three-in-ten (31%) problem gamblers (severe+moderate) say that gambling is important to them relative to other entertainment activities.



Gambling Alone or Accompanied

There is no statistically significant relationship between CPGI classifications and whether gamblers participate on their own or accompanied by someone else. Fifty-one percent of problem gamblers (severe+moderate) say they usually go alone, which is very close to the result for all past year gamblers (48% go alone).

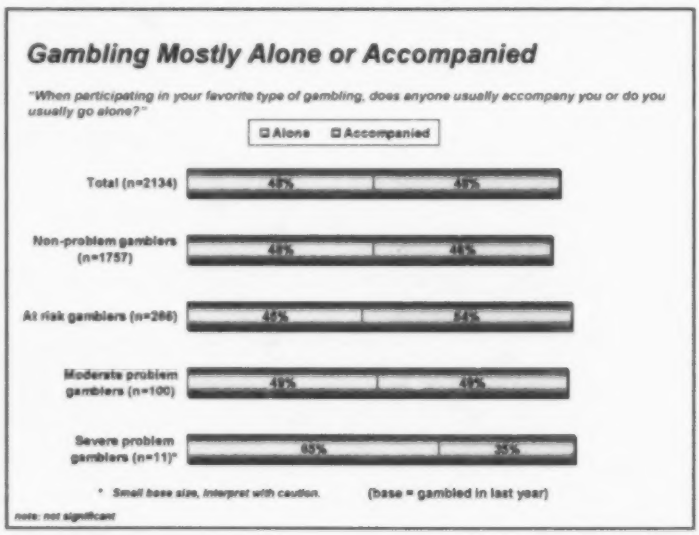


Personal Importance of Gambling

Gambling becomes more important relative to other entertainment activities as gamblers move up the CPGI. Three-in-ten (31%) problem gamblers (severe+moderate) say that gambling is important to them relative to other entertainment activities.

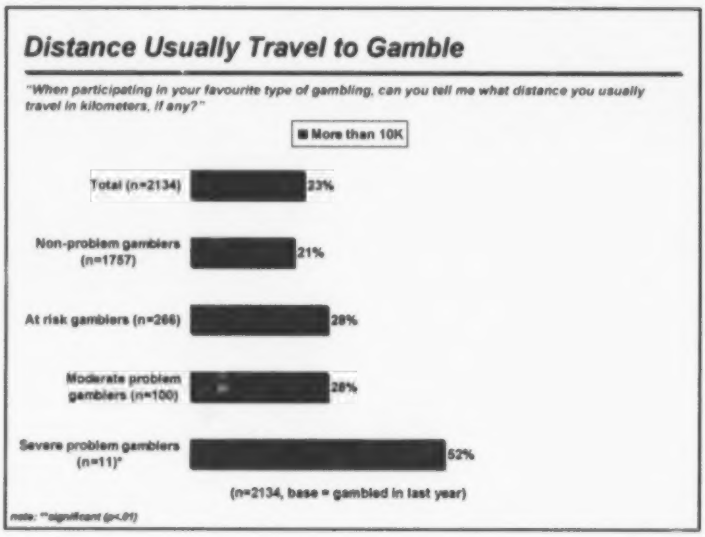
Gambling Alone or Accompanied

There is no statistically significant relationship between CPGI classifications and whether gamblers participate on their own or accompanied by someone else. Fifty-one percent of problem gamblers (severe+moderate) say they usually go alone, which is very close to the result for all past year gamblers (48% go alone).



Distance Usually Travelled

A statistically significant relationship exists between CPGI classifications and the distance gamblers usually travel to take part in their favourite gambling activity. The primary difference in distance travelled is between non-problem gamblers and all other gamblers. Two-in-ten (21%) non-problem gamblers usually travel more than 10 kilometres. This rises to three-in-ten at-risk gamblers (28%) and problem gamblers (31%, severe+moderate).

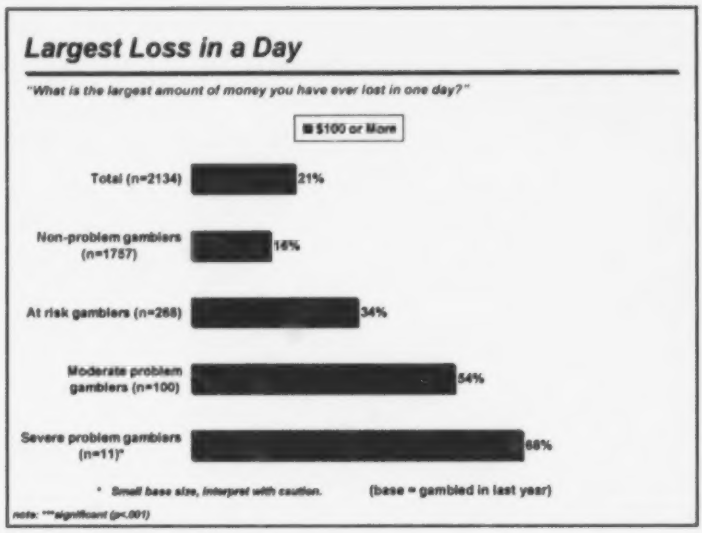

Distance Usually Travel to Gamble
"When participating in your favourite type of gambling, can you tell me what distance you usually travel in kilometers, if any?"
More than 10K
Total (n=2134)
23%
Non-problem gamblers (n=1757)
21%
At risk gamblers (n=266)
28%
Moderate problem gamblers (n=100)
28%
Severe problem gamblers (n=11)*
52%
(n=2134, base = gambled in last year)
note: **significant (p<.01)

Spending on Gambling

The amount that gamblers report spending on their gambling activities in a typical month is statistically linked with CPGI classifications. Only about one-in-ten (9%) non-problem gamblers say they spend more than $50 in a typical month. This rate nearly triples to 26 percent among at-risk gamblers and rises to 42 percent among problem gamblers (severe+moderate).

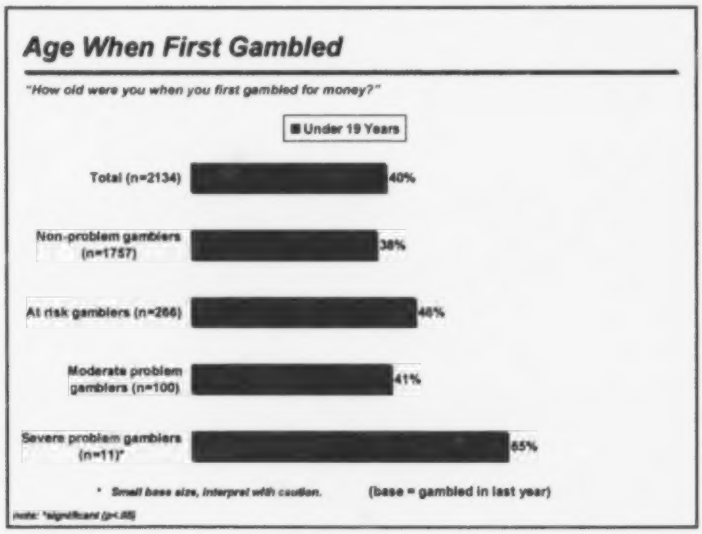
Largest Loss in a Day

There is a strong statistical relationship between CPGI classifications and the largest amount of money lost in a single day. A majority (56%) of problem gamblers (severe+moderate) have lost more than $100 in a single day. The incidence of heavy losses ($100+) is much lower among at-risk gamblers (34%) and much lower still among non-problem gamblers (16%).



Age When First Gambled

There is a slight statistical relationship between CPGI classifications and age started gambling. Thirty-eight percent of non-problem gamblers say they started gambling before their 19th birthday. This rate rises to 46 percent with at-risk gamblers and 44 percent with problem gamblers (severe+moderate).



6.0 CORRELATES OF PROBLEM GAMBLING

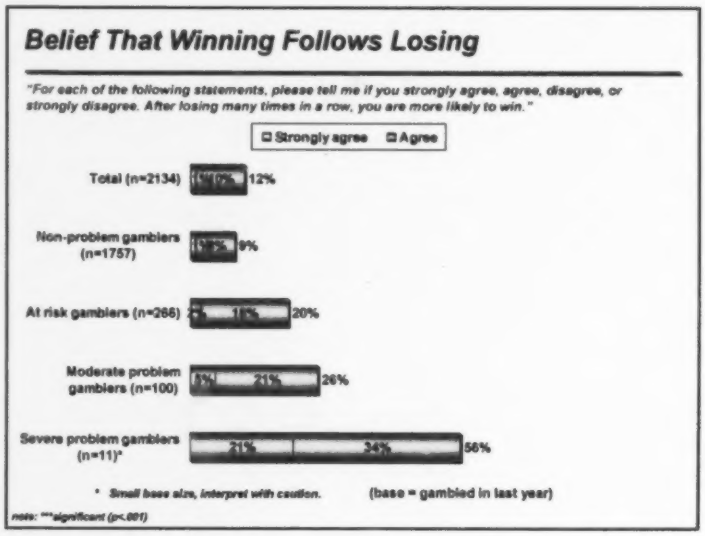
This section of the report looks at the relationship between CPGI classifications and certain correlates of problem gambling including gambling beliefs and early experiences with gambling. Again, the strength of each relationship is measured through a chi-square test.

6.1. *Gamblers' Fallacies*

Belief that Winning Follows Losing

Problem gamblers are more likely to believe the fallacy that "after losing many times in a row, you are more likely to win". Three-in-ten (29%) problem gamblers (severe+moderate) believe they are more likely to win after many losses. The belief in this fallacy drops to two-in-ten (20%) at-risk gamblers and one-in-ten (9%) non-problem gamblers.

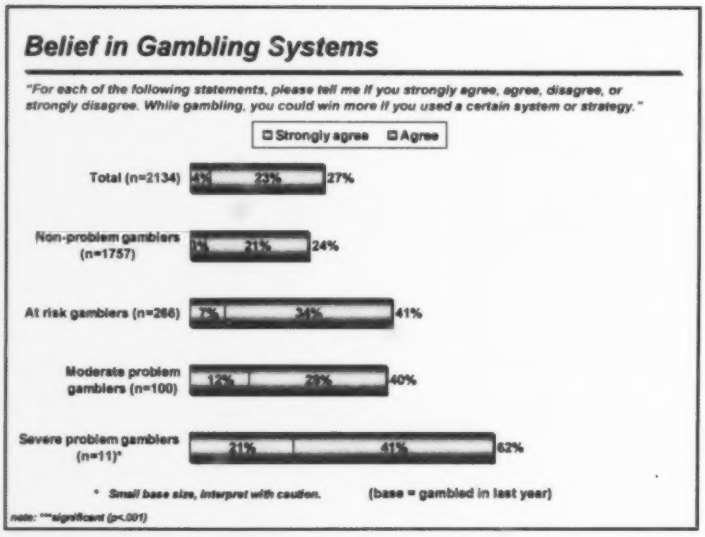
On a very small sample size, a majority (56%, n=11) of severe problem gamblers believe that winning follows losing.


Belief That Winning Follows Losing
"For each of the following statements, please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. After losing many times in a row, you are more likely to win."
Strongly agree
Agree
Total (n=2134)
12%
Non-problem gamblers (n=1757)
9%
At risk gamblers (n=266)
20%
Moderate problem gamblers (n=100)
26%
Severe problem gamblers (n=11)*
56%
* Small base size, interpret with caution.
(base = gambled in last year)
note: "*"significant (p<.001)

Belief in Gambling Systems

There is a statistically significant relationship between CPGI classifications and a belief in gambling systems. The differences, however, do not occur across the CPGI spectrum. Similar proportions of problem gamblers (42%, severe+moderate) and at-risk gamblers (41%) agree with the statement "while gambling, you could win more if you used a certain system or strategy." The real difference is with non-problem gamblers (24%) who are much less likely to agree with this fallacy.

As with the previous fallacy, on a very small sample size, a majority (62%, n=11) of severe problem gamblers believe in gambling systems.

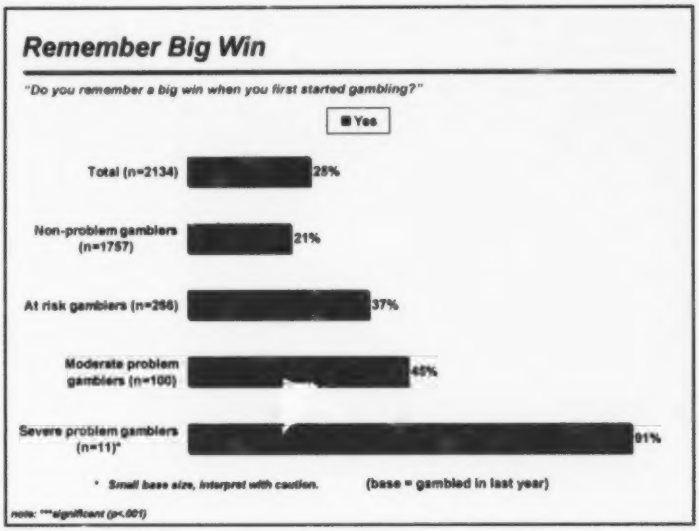

Belief in Gambling Systems
"For each of the following statements, please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. While gambling, you could win more if you used a certain system or strategy."
Strongly agree
Agree
Total (n=2134)
27%
Non-problem gamblers (n=1757)
24%
At risk gamblers (n=266)
41%
Moderate problem gamblers (n=100)
40%
Severe problem gamblers (n=11)*
62%
* Small base size, interpret with caution.
(base = gambled in last year)
note: "*"significant (p<.001)

6.2. Early Wins and Losses

Remembering a Big Win

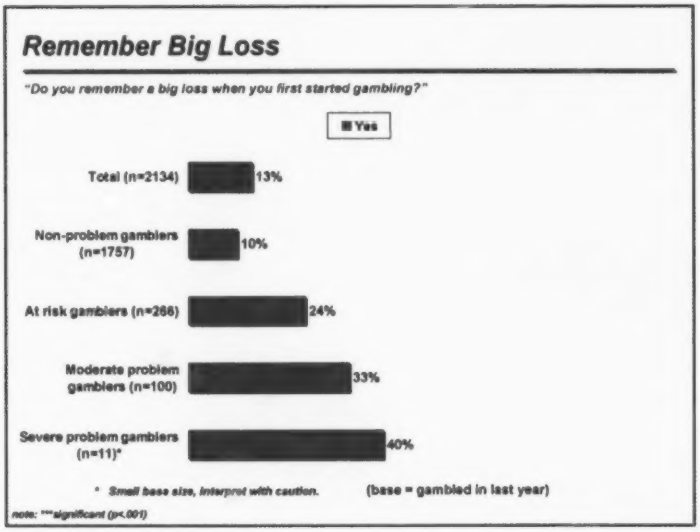
Problem gamblers are statistically more likely than other gamblers to recall a big win when they first started gambling. Five-in-ten (49%) problem gamblers (severe+moderate) remember a big win, compared to almost four-in-ten (37%) at-risk gamblers and two-in-ten (21%) non-problem gamblers.

Although the sample size is very small for severe problem gamblers, it is revealing that nearly all (91%, n=11) remember a big win.



Remembering a Big Loss

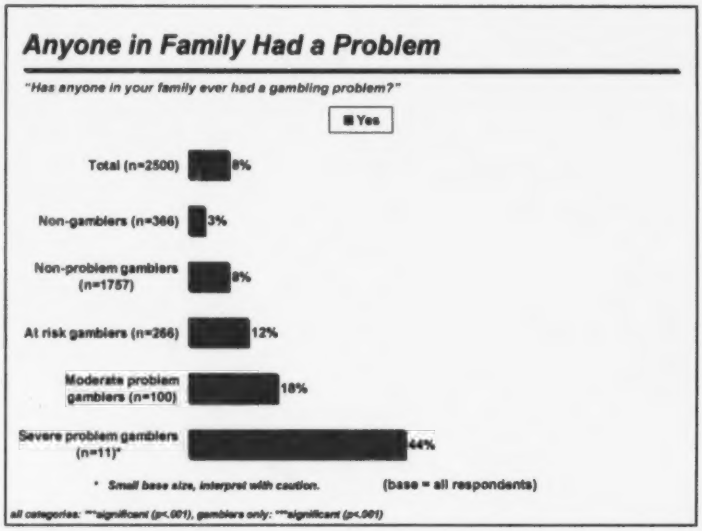
There is a statistically significant link between CPGI classifications and the likelihood of remembering a big loss when first started gambling. One-in-three (34%) problem gamblers (severe+moderate) remember a big loss when they first started gambling. This rate falls to one-in-four (24%) at-risk gamblers and one-in-ten (10%) non-problem gamblers.



6.3. Other's Problems

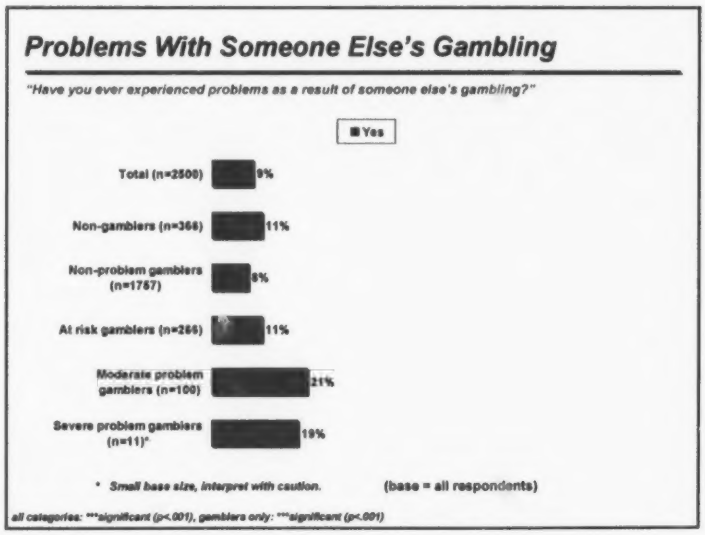
Family Problems with Gambling

There is a statistically significant relationship between CPGI classifications and gambling problems with a family member. Two-in-ten (21%) problem gamblers (severe+moderate) report having a family member with a gambling problem. This rate of family gambling problems falls to about one-in-ten at-risk gamblers (12%) and non-problem gamblers (8%). Only three percent of non-gamblers say that someone in their family has ever had a gambling problem.


Anyone in Family Had a Problem
"Has anyone in your family ever had a gambling problem?"
Yes
Total (n=2500) 8%
Non-gamblers (n=386) 3%
Non-problem gamblers (n=1757) 8%
At risk gamblers (n=266) 12%
Moderate problem gamblers (n=100) 18%
Severe problem gamblers (n=11)* 44%
* Small base size, interpret with caution.
(base = all respondents)
all categories: ""significant (p<.001), gamblers only: ""significant (p<.001)

Problems with Other's Gambling

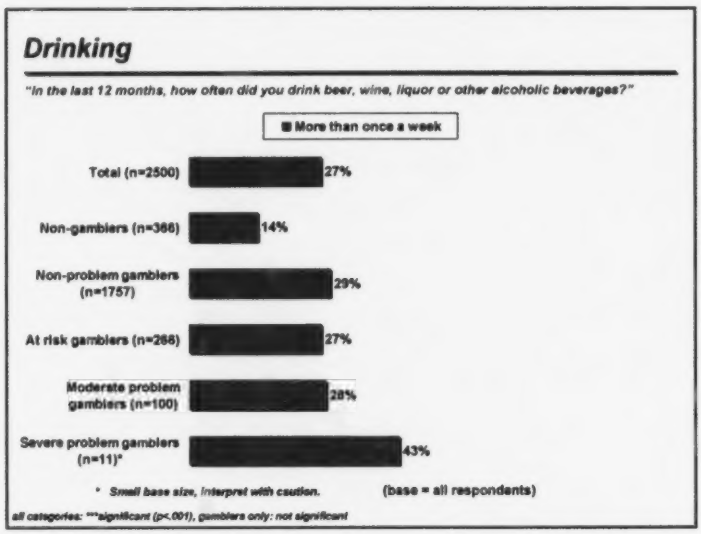
Problem gamblers are more likely to have experienced a problem as a result of someone else's gambling. Two-in-ten (21%) problem gamblers (severe+moderate) say they have experienced problems, compared to about one-in-ten at-risk gamblers (11%), non-problem gamblers (8%) and non-gamblers (11%).


Problems With Someone Else's Gambling
"Have you ever experienced problems as a result of someone else's gambling?"
Yes
Total (n=2500) 9%
Non-gamblers (n=386) 11%
Non-problem gamblers (n=1757) 8%
At risk gamblers (n=266) 11%
Moderate problem gamblers (n=100) 21%
Severe problem gamblers (n=11)* 19%
* Small base size, interpret with caution.
(base = all respondents)
all categories: ""significant (p<.001), gamblers only: ""significant (p<.001)

6.4. Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

Alcohol

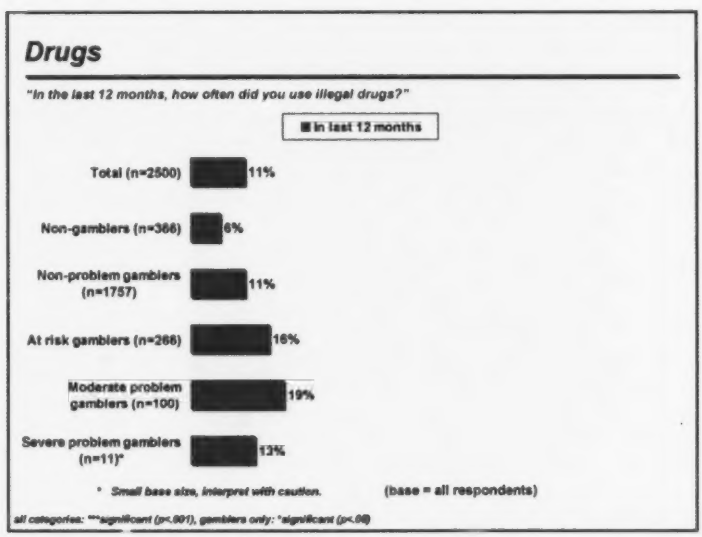
There is a statistically significant relationship between CPGI classifications and drinking alcoholic beverages. Specifically, non-gamblers drink much less frequently than gamblers. There are no statistical differences, however, across the four categories of past year gamblers within the CPGI. Three-in-in ten problem gamblers (29%, severe+moderate), at-risk gamblers (27%) and non-problem gamblers (29%) drink an alcoholic beverage more than once a week.



Illegal Drugs

There is a statistically significant relationship between CPGI classifications and the reported use of illegal drugs. This relationship includes differences between non-gamblers and gamblers, as well as slight differences between the various classifications of gamblers.

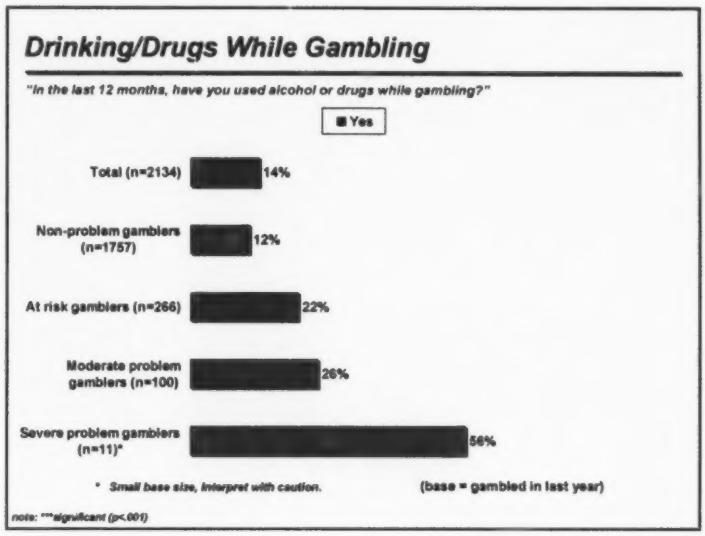
One-in-ten (11%) British Columbians admit to using illegal drugs within the past year. This rate is twice as high among gamblers (12%) as it is among non-gamblers (6%). Among gamblers, drug use increases slightly along the CPGI scale. Past year drug use is 18 percent among problem gamblers (severe+moderate), 16 percent among at-risk gamblers and 11 percent among non-problem gamblers.



Alcohol and Drugs While Gambling

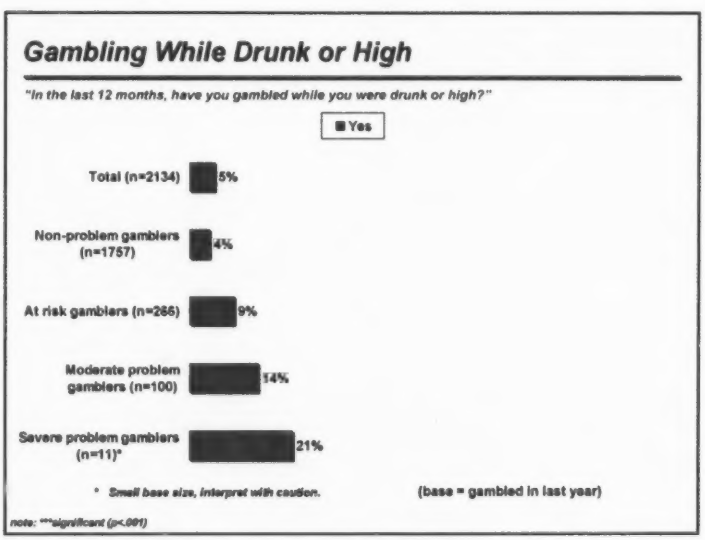
There is a statistically significant relationship between CPGI classifications and using alcohol or drugs while gambling. Roughly three-in-ten (29%) problem gamblers (severe+moderate) say they have used alcohol or drugs while gambling during the past 12 months. This rate falls by seven points among at-risk gamblers (22%) and a further 10 points among non-problem gamblers (12%).

On a very small sample size, a majority (56%, n=11) of severe problem gamblers say they have used alcohol or drugs while gambling.



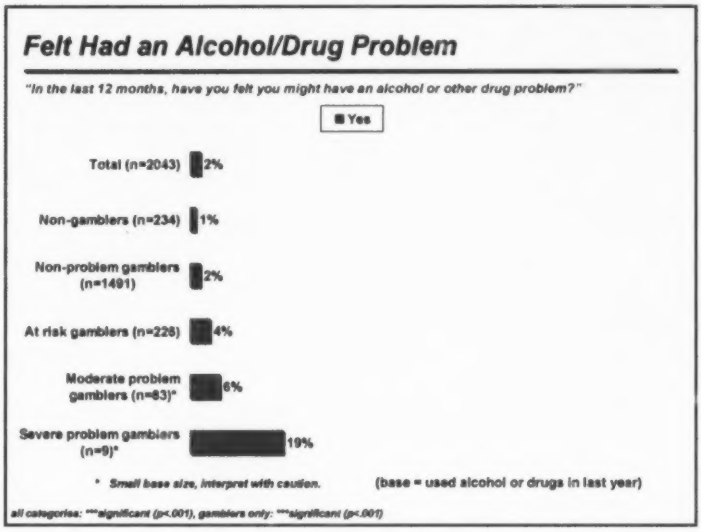
Gambling While Drunk or High

There is a statistically significant link between CPGI classifications and gambling while drunk or high. Overall, five percent of past year gamblers say they have gambled while drunk or high. This rises to nine percent among at-risk gamblers and 15 percent among problem gamblers (severe+moderate).



Perceived Alcohol/Drug Problems

Very few residents across all CPGI categories feel they might have an alcohol or drug problem over the last 12 months. Nevertheless, the rate among problem gamblers (7%, severe+moderate) is statistically higher than the overall rate of two percent among all British Columbians who have used alcohol or drugs in the last year.


Felt Had an Alcohol/Drug Problem
"In the last 12 months, have you felt you might have an alcohol or other drug problem?"
Yes
Total (n=2043)
2%
Non-gamblers (n=234)
1%
Non-problem gamblers (n=1491)
2%
At risk gamblers (n=226)
4%
Moderate problem gamblers (n=83)*
6%
Severe problem gamblers (n=9)*
19%
* Small base size, interpret with caution.
(base = used alcohol or drugs in last year)
all categories: ***significant (p<.001), gamblers only: ***significant (p<.001)

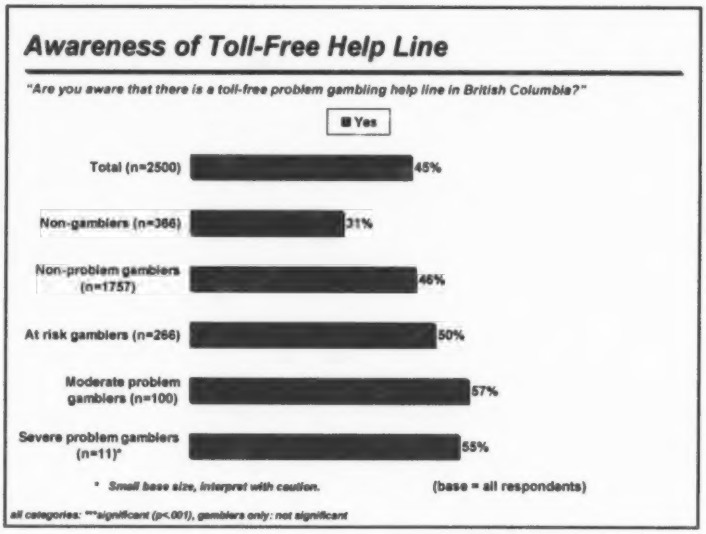
7.0 AWARENESS OF HELP SERVICES

7.1. *Toll-Free Help Line*

Nearly five-in-ten (45%) British Columbians say they are aware of a toll-free gambling help line in British Columbia. This awareness rate is considerably higher than in Ontario, where 36 percent claimed awareness in the 2001 problem gambling survey *(December 2001 - Wiebe, Single, Falkowski-Ham)*.

Awareness of BC's toll-free line is much higher among past year gamblers (47%) than among non-gamblers (31%). There are no statistical differences, however, among past year gamblers by CPGI classification. In other words, problem gamblers have the same level of awareness as other gamblers.

There are some clear targets for improving awareness of the toll-free help line. Awareness is lower in the Lower Mainland (39%) than in the rest of the province (52%). Awareness is also much lower with younger groups including the 18 to 24 years segment (36%), never-married residents (37%) and students (29%).



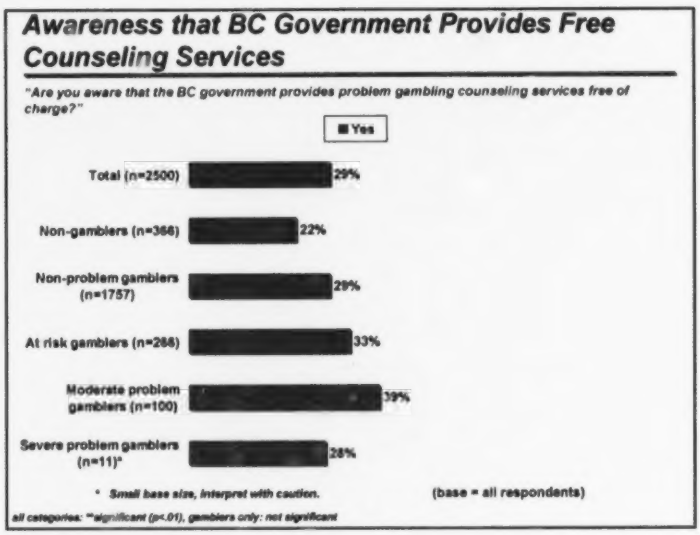
7.2. Free Counselling Services

Three-in-ten (29%) BC residents are aware that the BC government provides gambling counselling services free of charge.

As with toll-free help lines, awareness is higher with past year gamblers (30%) than with non-gamblers (22%).

And, although problem gamblers (38%, severe+moderate) have higher awareness than at-risk gamblers (33%) and non-problem gamblers (29%), the differences are not statistically significant.

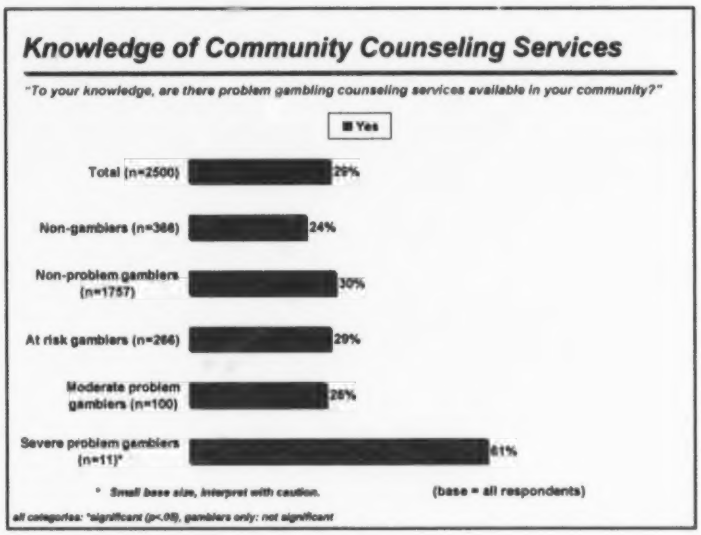
Awareness of free counselling services is lowest in the Lower Mainland (24% vs. 34% rest of BC), with students (19%) and never-married residents (22%).



7.3. Community Counselling Services

Three-in-ten (29%) British Columbians believe there are problem gambling counselling services available in their community. This is significantly poorer than awareness in the 2001 Ontario survey, where 47 percent said there are services in their community *(December 2001 - Wiebe, Single, Falkowski-Ham)*.

As with other gambling help services, awareness is lower in the Lower Mainland (25%) than across the rest of the province (34%). But, unlike other gambling help services, awareness is about average with younger residents and much lower with older residents. The poorest awareness of gambling counselling services is among seniors (20%, 65+ years), the pre-retired (25%, 55-64 years) and retired residents (23%).



8.0 CONCLUSIONS

Gambling Activity in British Columbia

- Fewer British Columbians are gambling on a lifetime (91%), past year (85%) and weekly (39%) basis than in 1996 or 1993. BC residents are more likely to perceive they are doing less gambling (25%) rather than more gambling (15%) compared to five years ago. Nevertheless, the vast majority (85%) of British Columbians are active gamblers, having participated in at least one gambling activity in the last year.
  - These declines are consistent with trends, particularly with weekly gamblers, found in other North American and international jurisdictions.
- Lottery games remain by far the most popular past year gambling activity of British Columbians. Three-in-four (74%) residents say they have spent money on a lottery game like 649, Daily 3, Scratch & Win, Keno or Pull-tabs within the past 12 months. Nevertheless, the rate of lottery game play has declined significantly from both 1996 (85%) and 1993 (81%).
- Casino gambling shows the greatest increase in activity from previous surveys. Past year casino visits have risen by 11 percentage points from 1996 (16%) and nine points from 1993 (18%).
- Very few British Columbians (2%) have ever gambled on the Internet.
- The prevalence of "gray" machine play is very low in British Columbia. Only one percent of BC residents say they have played an electronic gaming machine in BC that is located outside a casino.

Profile of Gamblers

- As mentioned previously, most (85%) British Columbians have gambled in the past year. This rate is somewhat higher among Southern British Columbians (90%), higher income residents (90%, $60K+) and the pre-retirement age group (90%, 55-64 years).
- The pre-retirement age group is also most likely to gamble on a weekly basis (53%, 55-64 years). Younger residents are much less likely to be weekly gamblers (26%, 18-24 years – 29%, 25-34 years). Other more prevalent weekly gamblers include those with less education (47%, high school or less), retired residents (46%), men (43% vs. 35% women) and higher income residents (43%, $60K+).
- Gambling is a low cost entertainment activity for most British Columbians, with two-thirds (65%) spending less than $10 per month. Heavier spending is strongly associated with certain gambling activities. Six-in-ten (61%) Internet gamblers (small sample n=33) report spending $50 or more per month on all their gambling activities. Other past year activities with higher rates of heavy spending include horse racing (39%), sports lotteries (36%), electronic gambling machines (34%, n=78), bingo (31%) and casino gambling (27%).

Problem Gambling Prevalence

- Using the Canadian Problem Gambling Index, we estimate that 4.6 percent of adult British Columbians are problem gamblers, including 4.2 percent who are moderate problem gamblers and 0.4 percent who are severe problem gamblers. While these percentages seem small, when projected out to the entire BC population they translate into a best estimate of 150,250 problem gamblers, including 136,000 moderate problem gamblers and 14,250 severe problem gamblers.

- Concerns about problem gambling extend beyond the small proportion of problem gamblers in the province. A further 11.1 percent of adult British Columbians are classified as at-risk gamblers, who may develop more severe problems in the future.
- The estimate of total problem gamblers in British Columbia is in the middle of the pack of Canadian jurisdictions that have completed surveys using the CPGI methodology. Manitoba (3.4%) is the only province that has a statistically significant different level of total problem gamblers than BC.
  - Meanwhile, the incidence of severe problem gamblers (0.4%) in British Columbia is the lowest of any comparable province. And, BC's estimate of severe problem gamblers is statistically lower than estimates from New Brunswick (1.4%), Alberta (1.3%), Saskatchewan (1.2%) and Manitoba (1.1%).
- Despite the positive news in these comparisons, British Columbia is not without risk of developing problems in the future. The level of at-risk gamblers (11.1%) in the province is the highest of any jurisdiction that has conducted a CPGI study.
- The higher rates of at-risk gamblers and lower rates of severe problem gamblers in British Columbia suggests the need for focusing on prevention and awareness issues to avoid a progression of at-risk gamblers into the more serious problem categories.
- Using the SOGS methodology to compare 2002 results with previous BC surveys, we find that the incidence of problem gambling in British Columbia is unchanged from previous surveys. This finding extends to all adult British Columbians, past year gamblers and weekly gamblers.

Profile of Problem Gamblers

- While problem gambling is not restricted to any particular segment of the BC population, some segments have much higher rates and merit special attention. Specifically, the prevalence of problem gamblers is higher than average among Northern residents (10.2%), young residents (9.8%, 18-24 years) and lower household income residents (6.8%, <$30K).
- In addition, past year participation in many gambling activities is associated with higher problem gambling rates. The top activities in terms of problem gamblers are sports lotteries (12.9%), bingo (10.9%), horse racing (10.4%) and casinos (8.8%).
  - And while small sample sizes prevent statistical conclusions, there is directional evidence that problem gambling rates are also higher among Internet gamblers (9.9%) and those who play electronic gambling machines outside casinos (8.4%).
- These findings point to the need for the Province to focus special attention on the North, youth and lower income residents. They also suggest the need for venue specific efforts directed at sports lotteries, bingo halls, horse racing betting sites and casinos.

Attitudes, Behaviours and Correlates of Problem Gambling

- Problem gamblers in British Columbia stand out from other gamblers in several ways. Specifically, problem gamblers are more likely than other gamblers to:
  - Perceive they have increased their gambling from five years ago;
  - Place a higher personal importance on gambling compared to other entertainment activities; and
  - Claim higher levels of spending and single day losses on gambling.

- The 2002 survey also confirms many correlates of problem gambling found in other studies. Specifically, problem gamblers are more likely than other gamblers and the general population to:
  - Believe in gamblers' fallacies such as "winning follows losing" and "winning through certain strategies";
  - Remember big early wins and big early losses;
  - Have a family member with gambling problems and have experienced a problem because of someone else's gambling; and
  - Have used alcohol or drugs while gambling and to have gambled while drunk or high.
- These findings suggest potential messaging for communications aimed at at-risk and problem gamblers. Useful messages would include topics like distance traveled to gamble, money spent on gambling, belief in fallacies, remembering a big win and drinking while gambling.

Help Services

- Most British Columbians are unaware of the help services available for at-risk and problem gamblers in British Columbia. Three-in-ten BC residents say they are aware of free counselling services (29%) and of counselling services available in their community (29%). Nearly five-in-ten (45%) residents claim to be aware of the toll-free help line in British Columbia.
- Clearly these services should be promoted to British Columbians who fall into one of the problem gambling or at-risk categories. In particular, the "free" aspect of services should be communicated to the lower income, young and student segments.
- In addition, there are several groups that have much lower awareness than the overall public of these services. These include:
  - Lower awareness of help lines in the Lower Mainland and among the young (18-24 years), never-married and students.
  - Lower awareness of free counselling services in the Lower Mainland and among students and never-married residents.
  - Lower awareness of community counselling services in the Lower Mainland and among older residents (55+ years).

REFERENCES

Abbott, M. W. 2001. What Do We Know About Gambling and Problem Gambling in New Zealand? Report Number Seven of the New Zealand Gaming Survey. Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs.

Abbott, M. W. & R. A. Volberg. 1996. "The New Zealand National Survey of Problem and Pathological Gambling," Journal of Gambling Studies, 12 (2): 143-160.

Abbott, M. W. & R. A. Volberg. 1999. Gambling and Problem Gambling in the Community: An International Overview and Critique. Report Number One of the New Zealand Gaming Survey. Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs.

Abbott, M. W. & R. A. Volberg. 2000. Taking the Pulse on Gambling and Problem Gambling in New Zealand: Phase One of the 1999 National Prevalence Survey. Report Number Three of the New Zealand Gaming Survey. Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs.

Abbott, M. W., R. A. Volberg & S. Rönnberg. 2001. The New Zealand and Swedish National Surveys of Gambling and Problem Gambling: Similarities and Differences. Paper presented at the 15th National Conference on Problem Gambling. Seattle, WA. June, 2001.

Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission & Wynne Resources. 1998. Adult Gambling and Problem Gambling in Alberta, 1998. Edmonton: Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission.

Alonso, W. & P. Starr (eds.). 1987. The Politics of Numbers. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

American Psychiatric Association. 1980. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Third Edition. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association.

American Psychiatric Association. 1994. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association.

Angus Reid Group. 1996. Problem Gambling Survey 1996. Vancouver: British Columbia Lottery Corporation.

Angus Reid Group & Gemini Research. 1994. Social Gaming and Problem Gambling in British Columbia. Vancouver: British Columbia Lottery Corporation.

Baseline Market Research. 1992. Prevalence Survey of Problem Gambling in New Brunswick. Fredericton: New Brunswick Department of Finance.

Baseline Market Research. 1996. Prevalence Study Problem Gambling: Wave 2. Fredericton: New Brunswick Department of Finance.

Baseline Market Research. 1996. 1996 Prevalence Study on Problem Gambling in Nova Scotia. Report to the Nova Scotia Department of Health.

Bondolfi, G., C. Osiek & F. Ferrero. 2000. "Prevalence Estimates of Pathological Gambling in Switzerland," Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica 101 (6): 473-475.

Cox, S., H. R. Lesieur, R. J. Rosenthal & R. A. Volberg. 1997. Problem and Pathological Gambling in America: The National Picture. Columbia, MD: National Council on Problem Gambling.

Criterion Research Corporation. 1993. Problem Gambling Study. Winnipeg: Manitoba Lotteries Foundation.

Criterion Research Corporation. 1995. Problem Gambling Study: Final Report. Winnipeg: Manitoba Lotteries Foundation.

Ferris, J. & T. Stirpe. 1995. Gambling in Ontario: A report from a general population survey on gambling-related problems and opinions. Toronto: Addiction Research Foundation.

Ferris, J. & H. Wynne. 2001. The Canadian Problem Gambling Index: Final Report. Ottawa: Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse.

Focal Research Consultants. 2001. 2001 Survey of Gambling and Problem Gambling in New Brunswick. Fredericton: New Brunswick Department of Health and Wellness.

Gerson, E. M. 1983. "Scientific Work and Social Worlds," Knowledge 4: 357-379.

Gerstein, D. R., R. A. Volberg, M. T. Toce, H. Harwood et al. 1999. Gambling Impact and Behavior Study: Report to the National Gambling Impact Study Commission. Chicago, IL: National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago.

Insight Canada Research. 1993. Prevalence of Problem and Pathological Gambling in Ontario using the South Oaks Gambling Screen. Toronto: Canadian Foundation for Compulsive Gambling.

Lesieur, H. R. 1994. "Epidemiological Surveys of Pathological Gambling: Critique and Suggestions for Modification," Journal of Gambling Studies 10 (4): 385-398.

Lesieur, H. R. 1998. "Costs and Treatment of Pathological Gambling," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 556: 153-171.

Lesieur, H. R. & S. B. Blume. 1987. "The South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS): A New Instrument for the Identification of Pathological Gamblers," American Journal of Psychiatry 144: 1184-1188.

Lesieur, H. R. & R. Klein. 1985. Prisoners, Gambling and Crime. Paper presented at the Meetings of the Academy of Criminal Justice Scientists.

Lesieur, H. R., S. B. Blume & R. M. Zoppa. 1986. "Alcoholism, Drug Abuse, and Gambling," Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research 10: 33-38.

Patton, D., D. Brown, J. Dhaliwal, C. Pankratz & B. Broszeit. 2002. Gambling Involvement and Problem Gambling in Manitoba. Winnipeg: Addictions Foundation of Manitoba.

Porter, T. M. 1995. Trust in Numbers: The Pursuit of Objectivity in Science and Public Life. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Prewitt, K. 1986. "Public Statistics and Democratic Politics." In Behavioral and Social Science: Fifty Years of Discovery, N. J. Smelser & Dean R. Gerstein (eds.). Washington, DC: National Academy Press. Pp. 113-128.

Productivity Commission. 1999. Australia's Gambling Industries, Report No. 10. Canberra: AusInfo.

Shaffer, H. J., M. N. Hall & J. Vander Bilt. 1997. Estimating the Prevalence of Disordered Gambling Behavior in the United States and Canada: A Meta-analysis. Boston, MA: Harvard Medical School Division on Addictions.

Shaffer, H. J., M. N. Hall & J. Vander Bilt. 1999. "Estimating the Prevalence of Disordered Gambling Behavior in the United States and Canada: A Research Synthesis," American Journal of Public Health 89 (9): 1369-1376.

Smith, G. J. & H. J. Wynne. 2002. Measuring Gambling and Problem Gambling in Alberta Using the Canadian Problem Gambling Index (CPGI). Alberta Gaming Research Institute.

Sproston, K., R. Erens & J. Orford. 2000. Gambling Behaviour in Britain: Results from the British Gambling Prevalence Survey. London: National Centre for Social Research.

Volberg, R. A. 1994. Gambling and Problem Gambling in Saskatchewan. Regina: Minister's Advisory Committee on Social Impacts of Gaming.

Volberg, R. A. 2001. When the Chips Are Down: Problem Gambling in America. New York, NY: The Century Foundation.

Volberg, R. A. & S. M. Banks. 1990. "A Review of Two Measures of Pathological Gambling in the United States," Journal of Gambling Behavior 6(2): 153-163.

Volberg, R. A. & H. J. Steadman. 1988. "Refining Prevalence Estimates of Pathological Gambling," American Journal of Psychiatry 145: 502-505.

Volberg, R. A., M. W. Abbott, S. Rönnberg & I. M. Munck. 2001. "Prevalence and Risks of Pathological Gambling in Sweden," Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica 104 (4): 250-256.

Walker, M. B. & M. G. Dickerson. 1996. "The Prevalence of Problem and Pathological Gambling: A Critical Analysis," Journal of Gambling Studies 12 (2): 233-249.

Welte, J., G. Barnes, W. Wieczorek, M. Tidwell & J. Parker. 2001. "Alcohol and Gambling Pathology among U.S. Adults: Prevalence, Demographic Patterns and Comorbidity," Journal of Studies on Alcohol 62: 706-712.

Wiebe, J., E. Single & A. Falkowski-Ham. 2001. Measuring Gambling and Problem Gambling in Ontario. Toronto: Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse and Responsible Gambling Council (Ontario).

Wynne, H. J. 2002. Gambling and Problem Gambling in Saskatchewan. Report prepared for Saskatchewan Health. Regina, SK: Saskatchewan Health.

Wynne, H. J., G. J. Smith & R. A. Volberg. 1994. Gambling and Problem Gambling in Alberta. Report to the Alberta Lotteries and Gaming Commission.

APPENDIX - QUESTIONNAIRE

BC Problem Gambling Study
Final Questionnaire
Revised November 13, 2002
06-0129-06

Hello, my name is _____ and I'm calling from Ipsos-Reid, a national public opinion research company. Today we're conducting a survey on behalf of the Government of BC on gambling activities and attitudes toward gambling. The information gathered in this survey will assist the government in developing new services. We are interested in a wide representation of viewpoints and would like to speak with people who gamble as well as those who do not gamble. Let me assure you that your individual responses will be kept completely confidential and your name and phone number will not be attached to any responses.

I'd like to speak to the person in your household who is 18 years of age or older and most recently had a birthday. Is that you?

Yes CONTINUE
Don't Know ASK AGAIN, IF STILL DK/REF THEN THANK AND TERMINATE
No

May I speak to that person? RE-READ INTRODUCTION

[IF ASKED] If you would like further information about this study, you may call Enquiry BC at 1-800-663-7867 and ask to be connected to the Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch. These calls can be made Monday to Friday 8:30 to 4:30.

SCREENERS

A. First, have I reached you at your home telephone number?

Yes
No

[IF YES CONTINUE, ELSE THANK AND TERMINATE]

B. Do you or does anyone in your household work for a marketing research company, a newspaper, radio or television station?

Yes
No

[IF YES THANK AND TERMINATE, ELSE CONTINUE]

[SECTION 1 – GAMBLING INVOLVEMENT]
First, we'd like to ask some questions about activities you may participate in.

People bet money and gamble on many different things including buying lottery tickets, playing bingo, or card games with their friends. I am going to list some activities that you might have bet money on.

[Hospital Lotteries]
1. Have you ever spent money on a charity raffle such as a hospital lottery?

Yes
No

[IF NO/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED IN Q1 SKIP TO Q3, ELSE GO TO Q2]

2. About how often did you spend money on these kinds of charity raffles in the past 12 months? (READ LIST)

(DO NOT READ) Daily (30+ times per month)
(DO NOT READ) Several times a week (6 – 29 times per month)
(DO NOT READ) Several times a month (3 – 5 times per month)
Once a month or less (6 – 12 times per year)
Only a few days all year (1 – 5 times per year)
Not at all in the past 12 months (0 times)

[Lottery Games]
3. Have you ever spent money on other lottery games like 649, Daily 3, Scratch & Win tickets, Keno or Pull-tabs?

Yes
No

[IF NO/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED IN Q3 SKIP TO Q6, ELSE GO TO Q4]

4. About how often did you play one of these lottery games in the past 12 months? (READ LIST)

Daily (30+ times per month)
Several times a week (6 – 29 times per month)
Several times a month (3 – 5 times per month)
Once a month or less (6 – 12 times per year)
Only a few days all year (1 – 5 times per year)
Not at all in the past 12 months (0 times)

[IF NOT AT ALL/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED IN Q4 SKIP TO Q6, ELSE GO TO Q5]

5. When you play lottery games, what kind of games do you usually play? Any others? (DO NOT READ LIST – ACCEPT UP TO THREE)

649 (Wednesday and Saturday draw)
Super 7 (Friday night draw)
BC49 (Wednesday and Saturday draw)
Daily 3
Keno
Chaser
Hospital/charity
Scratch & Win tickets
Pull-tabs/Break-opens
Charity raffles
Other (Specify)

[Bingo]

6. Have you ever played bingo for money?

Yes
No

[IF NO/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED IN Q6 SKIP TO Q9, ELSE GO TO Q7]

7. About how often have you played bingo for money in the past 12 months? (READ LIST)

Daily (30+ times per month)
Several times a week (6 – 29 times per month)
Several times a month (3 – 5 times per month)
Once a month or less (6 – 12 times per year)
Only a few days all year (1 – 5 times per year)
Not at all in the past 12 months (0 times)

[IF NOT AT ALL/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED IN Q7 SKIP TO Q9, ELSE GO TO Q8]

8. When you play bingo, is it mostly in a bingo hall or somewhere else?

Bingo hall
(DO NOT READ) Casino
Somewhere else (Specify)

[Casinos]

9. Have you ever gambled at a casino? (READ IF NECESSARY: A casino is a large gambling hall with many different kinds of games, for example, in a community casino, resort hotel, or on a cruise ship.)

Yes
No

[IF NO/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED IN Q9 SKIP TO Q13, ELSE GO TO Q10]

10. About how often did you gamble at a casino in the past 12 months? (READ LIST)

Daily (30+ times per month)
Several times a week (6 – 29 times per month)
Several times a month (3 – 5 times per month)
Once a month or less (6 – 12 times per year)
Only a few days all year (1 – 5 times per year)
Not at all in the past 12 months (0 times)

[IF NOT AT ALL/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED IN Q10 SKIP TO Q13, ELSE GO TO Q11]

11. When you visit a casino, is it mostly in British Columbia, another Canadian province, Nevada, Washington, another US state, or somewhere else?

British Columbia
Another province
Nevada
Washington
Another US state
Somewhere else (Specify)

12. When you gamble at a casino, what games do you usually play? Any others? (DO NOT READ LIST – ACCEPT UP TO THREE)

Card games such as blackjack, poker, pai gow and baccarat
Table games such as roulette or craps
Slot machines
Video games such as video poker
Keno games
Sports
Horse or dog race betting
Bingo
Pull-tabs
Other (Specify)

[Other Gaming Machines]

13. Have you ever gambled on an electronic gaming machine outside of a casino, such as a video lottery terminal? (INTERVIEWER NOTE: We are not referring to electronic bingo machines.)

Yes
No

[IF NO/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED IN Q13 SKIP TO Q16, ELSE GO TO Q14]

14. About how often did you gamble on an electronic gaming machine outside of a casino in the past 12 months? (READ LIST)

Daily (30+ times per month)
Several times a week (6 – 29 times per month)
Several times a month (3 – 5 times per month)
Once a month or less (6 – 12 times per year)
Only a few days all year (1 – 5 times per year)
Not at all in the past 12 months (0 times)

[IF NOT AT ALL/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED SKIP TO Q16, ELSE GO TO Q15]

15. When you gamble on an electronic gambling machine outside a casino, is it mostly in British Columbia, another Canadian province, Nevada, Washington, another US state, or somewhere else? (DO NOT READ LIST)

British Columbia
Another province
Nevada
Washington
Another US state
Somewhere else (Specify)

[Sports Lottery]
16. Have you ever spent money on a sports lottery game like Sports Action offered through a lottery retailer?

Yes
No

[IF NO/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED IN Q16 SKIP TO Q18, ELSE GO TO Q17]

17. About how often did you play a sports lottery game in the past 12 months? (READ LIST)

Daily (30+ times per month)
Several times a week (6 – 29 times per month)
Several times a month (3 – 5 times per month)
Once a month or less (6 – 12 times per year)
Only a few days all year (1 – 5 times per year)
Not at all in the past 12 months (0 times)

[Horse Racing]
18. Have you ever placed a bet on a horse race?

Yes
No

[IF NO/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED IN Q18 SKIP TO Q20, ELSE GO TO Q19]

19. About how often did you bet on a horse race in the past 12 months? (READ LIST)

Daily (30+ times per month)
Several times a week (6 – 29 times per month)
Several times a month (3 – 5 times per month)
Once a month or less (6 – 12 times per year)
Only a few days all year (1 – 5 times per year)
Not at all in the past 12 months (0 times)

[Sporting Events]

20. Have you ever bet on the outcome of sports or other events with friends, co-workers, a bookie or some other person?

Yes
No

[IF NO/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED IN Q20 SKIP TO Q22, ELSE GO TO Q21]

21. About how often have you gambled on sports in the past 12 months? (READ LIST)

Daily (30+ times per month)
Several times a week (6 – 29 times per month)
Several times a month (3 – 5 times per month)
Once a month or less (6 – 12 times per year)
Only a few days all year (1 – 5 times per year)
Not at all in the past 12 months (0 times)

[Private Games]

22. Have you ever gambled on a private game such as cards, dice or dominoes in someone's home or at a club or organization, or on a game of skill such as golf, pool or bowling? (READ: THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE PRIVATE GAMES ON THE INTERNET IF A THIRD PARTY IS TAKING A CUT OR PLAYERS ARE PLAYING AGAINST "THE HOUSE.")

Yes
No

[IF NO/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED IN Q22 SKIP TO Q24, ELSE GO TO Q23]

23. About how often have you gambled on a private game in the past 12 months? (READ LIST)

Daily (30+ times per month)
Several times a week (6 – 29 times per month)
Several times a month (3 – 5 times per month)
Once a month or less (6 – 12 times per year)
Only a few days all year (1 – 5 times per year)
Not at all in the past 12 months (0 times)

[Internet Gaming]

24. Have you ever gambled on the Internet or World Wide Web? (READ: "THIS INCLUDES LOTTERY TICKETS BOUGHT OVER THE INTERNET. THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE GAMES PLAYED AMONG PEOPLE UNLESS A BUSINESS HOSTING THE GAME TAKES A CUT.")

Yes
No

[IF NO/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED IN Q24 SKIP TO Q26, ELSE GO TO Q25]

25. About how often have you gambled on the Internet in the past 12 months? (READ LIST)

Daily (30+ times per month)
Several times a week (6 – 29 times per month)
Several times a month (3 – 5 times per month)
Once a month or less (6 – 12 times per year)
Only a few days all year (1 – 5 times per year)
Not at all in the past 12 months (0 times)

[Speculative Investments]

26. Have you ever called a broker or gone online to trade stocks, bonds or mutual funds? This includes trading in commodities and futures as well as placing puts and calls.

Yes
No

[IF NO/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED IN Q26 SKIP TO Q28, ELSE GO TO Q27]

27. About how often have you called a broker or gone online to trade stocks, bonds or mutual funds in the past 12 months? (READ LIST)

Daily (30+ times per month)
Several times a week (6 – 29 times per month)
Several times a month (3 – 5 times per month)
Once a month or less (6 – 12 times per year)
Only a few days all year (1 – 5 times per year)
Not at all in the past 12 months (0 times)

[Other Gambling]

28. Have you ever gambled on any other kind of game I haven't mentioned?

Yes
No

[IF NO/DON'T KNOW/REFUSED IN Q28 SKIP TO Q31, ELSE GO TO Q29]

29. What kind of game would that be?

[RECORD OPEN-ENDED]

30. About how often have you gambled on this kind of game in the past 12 months? (READ LIST)

Daily (30+ times per month)
Several times a week (6 – 29 times per month)
Several times a month (3 – 5 times per month)
Once a month or less (6 – 12 times per year)
Only a few days all year (1 – 5 times per year)
Not at all in the past 12 months (0 times)

[Overall Gambling Behaviours]

[IF EVER GAMBLED – YES TO Q1, Q3, Q6, Q9, Q13, Q16, Q18, Q20, Q22, Q24, Q26, OR Q28, ASK Q31, ELSE SKIP TO Q33]

31. Compared to 5 years ago, would you say that today you gamble more, less or about the same amount as before?

More
About the same
Less

[IF MORE OR LESS IN Q31, ASK Q32, ELSE SKIP TO Q33]

32. What is the main reason you are gambling [INSERT MORE/LESS] than 5 years ago? (PROBE FULLY). ACCCEPT ALL MENTIONS.

RECORD OPEN-ENDED

[IF GAMBLED IN LAST YEAR – CODES 1 TO 5 IN Q2, Q4, Q7, Q10, Q14, Q17, Q19, Q21, Q23, Q25, Q27, OR Q30, ASK Q33, ELSE SKIP TO NEXT SECTION]

33. Thinking about the sorts of activities we have discussed, can you tell me which is your favourite gambling activity? [DO NOT READ LIST] (ACCEPT ONLY ONE ANSWER)

Card games at a casino
Table games at a casino
Pull tabs/Break opens
Slot machines at a casino
Gaming machines outside a casino
Lottery games
Sports lottery games
Horse racing
Video games such as video poker
Keno games
Hospital/charity raffles
Bingo
Private games

Sports betting
Internet betting
Card games (not at a casino or on the Internet)
Stock trading
Some other activity (Specify)

34. When participating in your favorite type of gambling, does anyone usually accompany you or do you usually go alone?

Alone
Accompanied

35. When participating in your favourite type of gambling, can you tell me what distance you usually travel in kilometers, if any? (PAUSE, READ IF NECESSARY)

Don't travel
5K or less (3.1 miles or less)
6K to 10K (3.7 miles to 6.2 miles)
11K to 20K (6.8 miles to 12.4 miles)
21K to 50K (13.0 miles to 31.1 miles)
51K to 100K (32 miles to 62.1 miles)
More than 100K (More than 62.1 miles)

36. Compared to other entertainment activities, how important is gambling to you? Would you say it is … (READ LIST)

Very important
Somewhat important
Not at all important

37. About how much do you spend on gambling in an average month? (IF HESITANT, SAY "I'm just looking for an approximate amount." IF STILL HESITANT, READ LIST)

Less than $1
$1 to $10
$11 to $49
$50 to $99
$100 to $199
$200 to $299
$300 to $499
$500 to $999
More than $1000

38. What is the largest amount of money you have ever lost in one day? (READ LIST)

Less than $1
$1 - $9
$10 - $99
$100 - $999
$1,000 - $9,999
$10,000 or more

[SECTION 2 – PROBLEM GAMBLING ASSESSMENT]

The next questions are part of a standard measurement scale developed for use in gambling surveys across North America. Some of the next questions may not apply to you, but please try to be as accurate as possible. Remember that all of your answers are strictly confidential.

[ROTATE SOGS BLOCK AND CPGI BLOCK]

[SOGS Questions]
[IF GAMBLED IN LAST YEAR – CODES 1 TO 5 IN Q2, Q4, Q7, Q10, Q14, Q17, Q19, Q21, Q23, Q25, Q27, OR Q30, ASK Q39, ELSE SKIP TO NEXT SECTION]

39. In the last 12 months, when you participated in the gambling activities we have discussed, have you claimed to be winning money from these activities when in fact you lost? (IF YES, ASK) Would you say some of the time, most of the time, or almost always?

No/Never
Some of the time
Most of the time
Almost always

40. In the last 12 months, have you spent more time or money gambling than you intended?

Yes
No

41. In the last 12 months, have you felt like you would like to stop gambling, but didn't think that you could? (IF YES, ASK) Would you say sometimes, most of the time, or almost always?

(IF RESPONDENT IS UNCLEAR, RE-READ ENTIRE SCALE, INCLUDING "No/Never")
No/Never
Sometimes
Most of the time
Almost always

42. In the last 12 months, have you hidden betting slips, lottery tickets, gambling money, or other signs of gambling from your spouse or partner, children or other important people in your life? (IF YES, ASK) Would you say sometimes, most of the time, or almost always?

(IF RESPONDENT IS UNCLEAR, RE-READ ENTIRE SCALE, INCLUDING "No/Never")
No/Never
Sometimes
Most of the time
Almost always

43. In the last 12 months, have you argued with people you live with over how you handle money?

Yes
No

[IF YES IN Q43, ASK Q44, ELSE SKIP TO Q45]
44. Have these money arguments centered on your gambling?

Yes
No

45. In the last 12 months, have you lost time from work or school due to gambling?

Yes
No

46. In the last 12 months, have you borrowed money from someone and not paid them back as a result of your gambling?

Yes
No

Next, I am going to read a list of ways in which some people get money for gambling. Can you tell me which of these, if any, you have ever used to get money for gambling or to pay gambling debts?

47. In the last 12 months, have you borrowed from household money to gamble or pay gambling debts?

Yes
No

48. In the last 12 months, have you borrowed money from your spouse or partner to gamble or pay gambling debts?

Yes
No

49. In the last 12 months, have you borrowed from other relatives or in-laws to gamble or pay gambling debts?

Yes
No

50. In the last 12 months, have you gotten loans from banks, loan companies or credit unions to gamble or pay gambling debts?

Yes
No

51. In the last 12 months, have you made cash withdrawals on credit cards to get money to gamble or pay gambling debts? [READ: "THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE INSTANT CASH CARDS FROM BANK ACCOUNTS."]

Yes
No

52. In the last 12 months, have you gotten loans from loan sharks to gamble or pay gambling debts?

Yes
No

53. In the last 12 months, have you cashed in stocks, bonds or other securities to finance gambling?

Yes
No

54. In the last 12 months, have you sold personal or family property to gamble or pay gambling debts?

Yes
No

55. In the last 12 months, have you borrowed from your checking account by writing checks that bounced to get money for gambling or to pay gambling debts?

Yes
No

CPGI Questions

[IF GAMBLED IN LAST YEAR – CODES 1 TO 5 IN Q2, Q4, Q7, Q10, Q14, Q17, Q19, Q21, Q23, Q25, Q27, OR Q30, ASK Q56 TO Q66, ELSE SKIP TO NEXT SECTION]

56. Thinking about the last 12 months, when you participated in the gambling activities we have discussed, how often have you bet more than you could really afford to lose? Would you say never, sometimes, most of the time, or almost always?

Never
Sometimes
Most of the time
Almost always

57. Thinking about the last 12 months, how often have you needed to gamble with larger amounts of money to get the same feeling of excitement? Would you say never, sometimes, most of the time, or almost always?

Never
Sometimes
Most of the time
Almost always

58. Thinking about the last 12 months, when you gambled, how often did you go back another day to try to win back the money you lost? Would you say never, sometimes, most of the time, or almost always?

Never
Sometimes
Most of the time
Almost always

59. Thinking about the last 12 months, how often have you borrowed money or sold anything to get money to gamble? Would you say never, sometimes, most of the time, or almost always?

Never
Sometimes,
Most of the time
Almost always

60. Thinking about the last 12 months, how often have you felt that you might have a problem with gambling? Would you say never, sometimes, most of the time, or almost always?

Never
Sometimes
Most of the time
Almost always

61. Thinking about the last 12 months, how often have people criticized your betting or told you that you had a gambling problem, regardless of whether or not you thought it was true? Would you say never, sometimes, most of the time, or almost always?

Never
Sometimes
Most of the time
Almost always

62. Thinking about the last 12 months, how often have you felt guilty about the way you gamble or what happens when you gamble? Would you say never, sometimes, most of the time, or almost always?

Never
Sometimes
Most of the time
Almost always

63. Thinking about the last 12 months, how often has gambling caused you any health problems, including stress or anxiety? Would you say never, sometimes, most of the time, or almost always?

Never
Sometimes
Most of the time
Almost always

64. Thinking about the last 12 months, how often has your gambling caused any financial problems for you or your household? Would you say never, sometimes, most of the time, or almost always?

Never
Sometimes
Most of the time
Almost always

65. Thinking about the last 12 months, how often have you gambled as a way of escaping problems or to help you feel better when you were depressed? Would you say never, sometimes, most of the time, or almost always?

Never
Sometimes
Most of the time
Almost always

66. Thinking about the last 12 months, how often have you stolen anything or done anything illegal such as write bad cheques so that you could have money to gamble? Would you say never, sometimes, most of the time, or almost always?

Never
Sometimes
Most of the time
Almost always

[SECTION 3 – CORRELATES]

Next, we explore some of your beliefs about gambling, as well as any early experiences you have had with gambling or betting money. Again, all your responses will be kept strictly confidential.

[IF GAMBLED IN LAST YEAR – CODES 1 TO 5 IN Q2, Q4, Q7, Q10, Q14, Q17, Q19, Q21, Q23, Q25, Q27, OR Q30, ASK Q67, Q68, Q69, Q70, ELSE GO TO Q71]

67. How old were you when you first gambled for money? (INTERVIEWER: If exact age is not known, accept range, i.e. in my 20s, etc.)

Enter exact age (RANGE 8-100)
Other (Specify)
DO NOT GAMBLE

68. For each of the following statements, please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree? (READ AND ROTATE STATEMENTS)

After losing many times in a row, you are more likely to win.
While gambling, you could win more if you used a certain system or strategy.

Strongly agree
Agree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

69. Do you remember a big win when you first started gambling?

Yes
No

70. Do you remember a big loss when you first started gambling?

Yes
No

[ASK ALL]

71. Has anyone in your family ever had a gambling problem?

Yes
No

72. Have you ever experienced problems as a result of someone else's gambling?

Yes
No

73. In the last 12 months, how often did you drink beer, wine, liquor or other alcoholic beverages? Was it . . .?

4 to 6 times a week or more
2 to 3 times a week
Once a week
2 to 3 times a month
Once a month
Less than once a month
Never in last 12 months
Never in lifetime

74. In the last 12 months, how often did you use illegal drugs? Was it . . .?

4 to 6 times a week or more
2 to 3 times a week
Once a week
2 to 3 times a month
Once a month
Less than once a month
Never in last 12 months
Never in lifetime

[IF GAMBLED IN LAST YEAR – CODES 1 TO 5 IN Q2, Q4, Q7, Q10, Q14, Q17, Q19, Q21, Q23, Q25, Q27, OR Q30 **AND** USED ALCOHOL AND DRUGS IN LAST 12 MONTHS – CODES 1 TO 6 IN Q73 OR Q74, ASK Q75, Q76, ELSE GO TO Q77]
75. In the last 12 months, have you used alcohol or drugs while gambling?

Yes
No

76. In the last 12 months, have you gambled while you were drunk, or high?

Yes
No

[IF USED ALCOHOL AND DRUGS IN LAST 12 MONTHS – CODES 1 TO 6 IN Q73 OR Q74, ASK Q77, ELSE SKIP TO 178]
77. In the last 12 months, have you felt you might have an alcohol or other drug problem?

Yes
No

[IF GAMBLED IN LAST YEAR – CODES 1 TO 5 IN Q2, Q4, Q7, Q10, Q14, Q17, Q19, Q21, Q23, Q25, Q27, OR Q30, ASK Q78, ELSE GO TO Q79]

78. In the last 12 months, have you been under a doctor's care because of physical or emotional problems brought on by gambling?

Yes
No

79. Are you aware that there is a toll free problem gambling help line in British Columbia?

Yes
No

80. Are you aware that the BC provincial government provides problem gambling counseling services free of charge?

Yes
No

81. To your knowledge, are there problem gambling counseling services available in your community?

Yes
No

[SECTION 4 – DEMOGRAPHICS]

Finally, we would like to ask you some basic background questions. Like all your other answers, this information will be kept strictly confidential.

82. In what year were you born? (ENTER RANGE FROM 1892 TO 1984)

ENTER YEAR

83. Currently are you married, living with a partner, widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never been married?

Married
Living with a partner
Widowed
Divorced
Separated
Never married

84. To what ethnic or cultural group did you or your ancestors belong to on first coming to this country? **(INTERVIEWER: IF NOT CLEAR, SAY "ARE YOU SCOTTISH, CHINESE, GREEK, OR SOMETHING ELSE?") (ACCEPT MULTIPLE ANSWERS)**

Aboriginal/Native/Metis
"Canadian"
English/Irish/Scottish/Welsh
French/French Canadian
Chinese/Hong Kong/Taiwanese
Dutch
East Indian/Pakistani
Filipino/Philippines
German
Greek
Italian
Japanese
Jewish
Korean
Mennonite
Polish
Portuguese
Russian
Scandinavian – Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Iceland
Ukrainian
Other (Specify)

[IF CANADIAN ONLY IN Q84 ASK Q85, ELSE SKIP TO 86]
[IF REFUSED IN Q84, SKIP TO Q86]

85. In addition to being Canadian, to what ethnic or cultural group did you or your ancestors belong to on first coming to this continent? (READ IF NECESSARY: "ARE YOU SCOTTISH, CHINESE, GREEK, OR SOMETHING ELSE?) (ACCEPT MULTIPLE ANSWERS)

Aboriginal/Native/Metis
English/Irish/Scottish/Welsh
French/French Canadian
Chinese/Hong Kong/Taiwanese
Dutch
East Indian/Pakistani
Filipino/Philippines
German
Greek
Italian
Japanese
Jewish
Korean
Mennonite

Polish
Portuguese
Russian
Scandinavian – Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Iceland
Ukrainian
Other (Specify)

86. What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed? (READ LIST AS NECESSARY)

Grade school or some high school
Completed high school
Post secondary technical school
Some college or university
Completed college diploma
Completed university degree
Post-grad degree (Masters, Ph.D, etc.)

87. What is your present job status? Are you employed full-time, employed part-time, unemployed, a student, retired or a homemaker? **(INTERVIEWER: IF RESPONDENT GIVES MORE THAN ONE ANSWER, RECORD THE ONE THAT APPEARS FIRST ON THE LIST)**

Employed full time (30 or more hours/week)
Employed part time (less than 30 hours/week)
Unemployed (out of work but looking for work)
Student – employed part time or full time
Student – not employed
Self-employed
Retired
Homemaker
Other

[IF EMPLOYED FULL/PART TIME OR SELF EMPLOYED IN Q87 ASK Q88, ELSE SKIP TO Q89]
88. What is your occupation? (or, what is your occupation when you are employed)? (READ LIST ONLY TO CLARIFY)

Professional (e.g., doctor, lawyer, teacher)
Business executive/manager
Owner/entrepreneur
Commission/agency sales
Clerical/service/retail sales
Technical (e.g., computer programmer)
Skilled labour (e.g., plumber, carpenter, electrician)
Unskilled labour (e.g., waitress, janitorial services)
Police/military
Farmer/fisher
Other (Specify)

89. How many people under 18 years-of-age live with you? (ENTER RANGE 0 AND 15)

ENTER NUMBER OF PEOPLE

90. How important is religion in your life? Would you say very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not important at all?

Very important
Somewhat important
Not very important
Not important at all

91. And finally, which of the following broad categories best describes your family income? That is the combined total income before taxes of all persons in your household? (READ LIST)

Under $30,000
$30,000 to just under $60,000
$60,000 to just under $100,000
$100,000 or more

This survey is being done for the government of British Columbia to investigate how many people in the province might have problems with gambling. As a courtesy, we offer all participants a telephone number, in case they wish to speak to someone who knows more about gambling or gambling problems. I have a phone number available for your area, would you like that number?

IF YES, ASK: Can you tell me what area you live in? (Provide respondents with contact information for agency/agencies in their region; see list of numbers)

Thank you for helping us with this survey. Your responses are very important to us, and we do appreciate the time it has taken to answer our questions.

Thanks again for helping us out.